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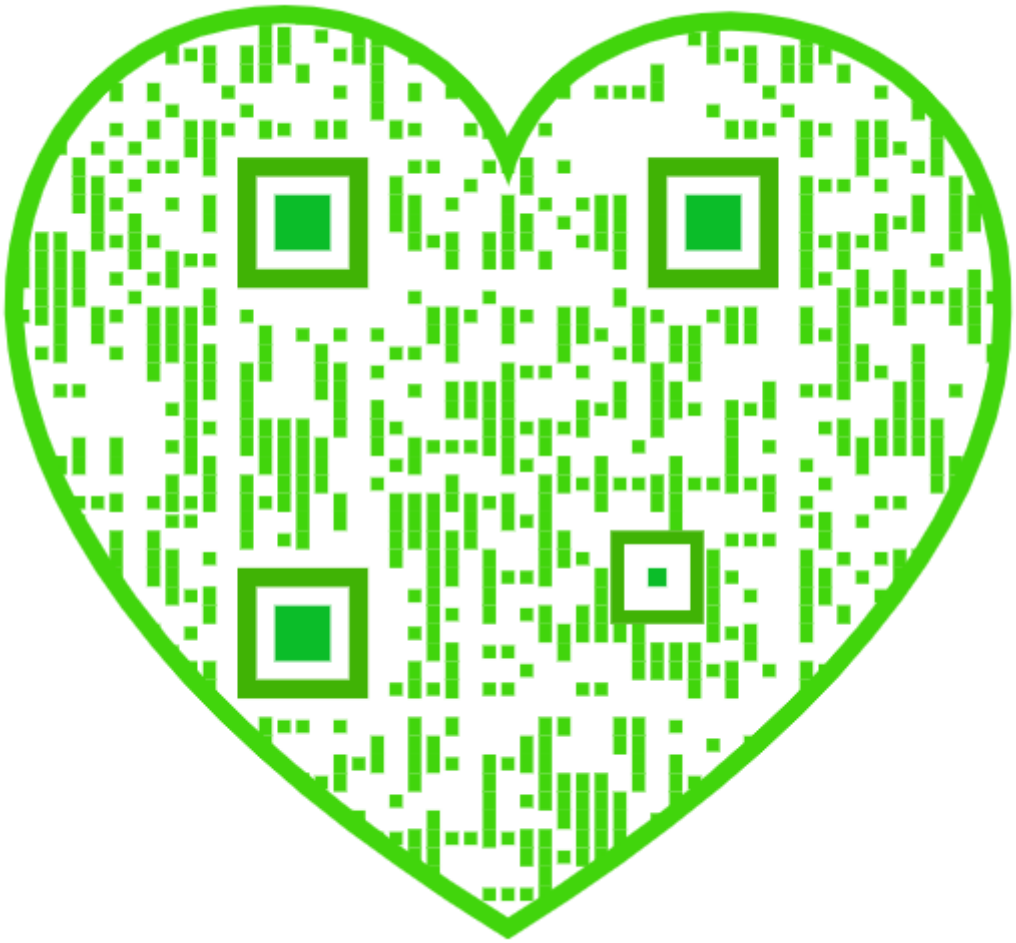
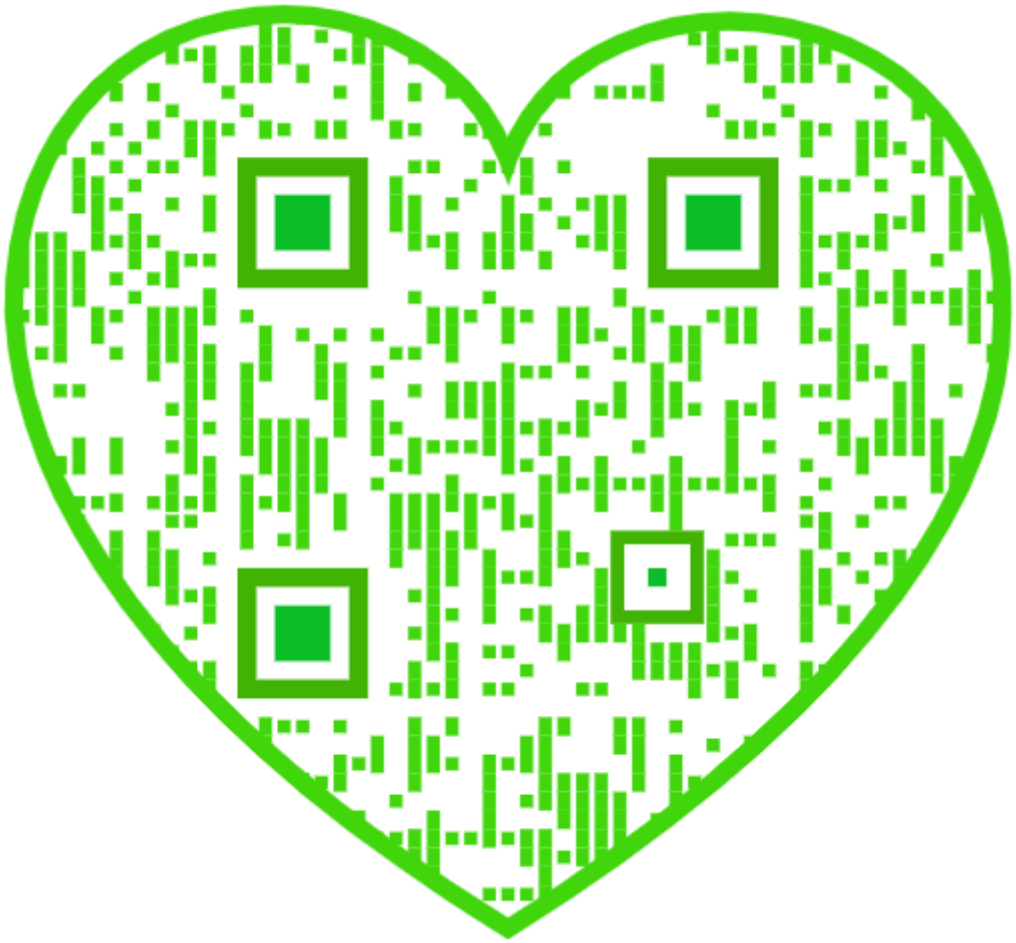
THE WAR WITHIN

LE BOSQUET





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THE WAR WITHIN

THE WAR WITHIN

BEING
A FEW ADMONITORY THOUGHTS
UPON SOME MODERN
TEMPTATIONS

BY

JOHN EDWARDS LE BOSQUET

BOULDER, COLORADO
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THE WAR WITHIN

THE view that the soul of man is torn by contending forces is corroborated in many directions of human thought. Plato may well speak for the philosophers on this matter when he represents man as a charioteer driving a pair of winged horses through the air:

> The well-conditioned horse is erect and well-formed; he has a lofty neck and an aquiline nose, and his color is white, and he has dark eyes and is a lover of honor and modesty and temperance, and the follower of true glory; he needs not the touch of the whip but is guided by word and admonition only. Whereas the other is a large misshapen animal, put together anyhow; he has a strong, short neck; he is flat-faced and of a dark color, gray-eyed and bloodshot, the mate of insolence and pride, shag-eared, deaf, hardly yielding to blow or spur.*

The one tends heavenward the other earthward, and the driver of them is constantly in discomfort and discord for, "as might be expected, there is a great deal of trouble in managing them."

Literature asserts it. I need only mention that inspired parable of life, Robert Louis Stevenson's *Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*. The good and respected Dr. Jekyll finds, in the course of his experiments, a drug which will, if taken, release the bad in a man from the control of the good in him. The

* *Phaedrus*, 253, Jowett's translation.

physician resolves to test it upon himself. He knows something of the danger of it, but, to quote his words,

> The temptation of a discovery so singular and profound at last overcame the suggestions of alarm. . . . . Late one accursed night, I compounded the elements, watched them boil and smoke together in the glass, and when the ebullition had subsided, with a strong glow of courage, drank off the potion.
>
> The most racking pangs succeeded; a grinding in the bones, deadly nausea, and a horror of the spirit. Then these agonies began swiftly to subside, and I came to myself. . . . . I felt younger, lighter, happier, in body; within I was conscious of a heady recklessness, a current of disordered sensual images running like a mill race in my fancy, a dissolution of the bonds of obligation, an unknown but not an innocent freedom of the soul.*

He has been changed into the repulsive Mr. Hyde, the incarnation of evil and devilishness. For a time he rejoices in his successful discovery. He enjoys the putting on of another personality, and the change, the adventure of it when for an hour or two he can venture forth in a disguise absolutely impenetrable. But at length with repetition, evil gains the mastery, even when he has taken none of the drug. He wakes up each morning not Dr. Jekyll but the fiendish Mr. Hyde. So the story goes on. The drug with which he can throw off Mr. Hyde is used up at last. He tries to replace

* Chapter entitled "Dr. Lanyon's Narrative."

it. In vain! With the energy of desperation he sends to every pharmacist in the city. All, all useless! The final tragedy is come to pass. He is Mr. Hyde for good and all with no possibility of ever being again the beloved and, above all, the self-respecting Dr. Jekyll. Is not the basis and background of this powerful tale plainly the keen sense of the novelist that in each man evil and good are battling, warring for supremacy?

Science asserts the fact and with far more authority. The great word of science at present is evolution, the mounting up of higher forms from lower ones. But this "evolution" is no mechanical certainty. At every stage there are always two forces at work. There is the tendency onward to new and higher species, and there is the trend backward to former lower levels. There is not only "development"; there is also "reversion to type." There is "evolution" but also "degeneration." A war is on in every geological formation, in every species, yes in every individual plant and animal. A fine illustration of this individual aspect of the world-struggle in an animal is to be found in a book* published some years ago by Mr. Jack London. It is the narrative of a dog who feels both the backward and the forward pull. At the

* *The Call of The Wild.*

opening chapter the dog in question is living in great contentment with his master in the camp life of the western woods. But one day the animal chances to hear the baying of some wolves in the distance. The sound rouses something new and strange and stirring within him, for, as every scientist knows, his species far back in the past was not dog but wolf. Often after that the dog wanders in the forest at night, tasting, relishing from afar the tang of the old freedom of the wood; watching the wolves, listening to their yelpings, his head cocked to one side, not joining them but keenly interested and vaguely envious. All the while by day he is still the same affectionate, domestic comrade he has ever been. The master dies. The dog is inconsolable. He haunts the grave. Yet from time to time he wanders in the wood at night, and now and then as time goes on, by day. He refuses to accept any other master. He is becoming a wild thing. So he lives for months, his master's burial-place his only link with humanity, himself wavering—till at length he disappears. He has joined the wolf-pack. He has heard and obeyed "the call of the wild."

And this war, which science knows so well in all nature, is even more in man, a part of nature in the very fact that he is at the head of nature. Man

as such, for science as well as religion, hears two voices within him, the one reactionary, calling him back to savagery and even to brutishness, the other summoning him onward to the heights of self-control and civilization and morality and religion.

Deeper than all, our own experience testifies to the fact. In each of us there is—we all know it—an evil and a good, a worse and a better. Call it conscience over against pleasure, or the truer self over against one's evil propensities, or the voice of God and the voice of the devil; call it what you please: the fact of experience is there in every human being. There is a great war going on within, a great struggle between powerfully contending forces. Look at the armies as they are to be found face to face. On the one side there is all that would debase: sloth bidding us take life easily and comfortably; sensuality crying ever, "More, more"; selfishness and greed urging us to grasp all in our power for our own; hatred, envy, ill-temper, seeking to transform us into beasts. The lusts of the flesh! They are in every man and woman of us. But, thank God, theirs is not the only army in the field. See on the other side the forces which bless and uplift drawn up in battle array: the beauty of holiness; the joy of purity and cleanness of life; the blessedness of generosity;

the appealing grace of kindliness; the attractiveness and deep worth of helpfulness, unselfishness, and love. Ah the spiritual forces—the good, the true, the beautiful, the manly, the womanly, the earnest! We all are acquainted with the flesh but we all know the spirit too. Both appeal to us, the one to our sense of ease and our desire for immediate returns, the other to our strength and truth and heroism. The flesh and the spirit! We feel the tug of each of them; we *are* both of them at once. The flesh and the spirit! There they are. Sometimes they face each other in mutual repulsion. More often they are clutching, wrestling, hacking at each other, struggling for the battle-ground they occupy—which is your soul and mine. They are both within us; they are both part of us: it is a civil war and that renders it the more discordant and disagreeable. But pleasant or not it goes on. Day after day "the flesh lusteth against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh; for these are contrary the one to the other." There can be no question of the struggle. There is a war within.

What now is our position as regards this great war? There are three possible attitudes, one or another of which men do, as a matter of fact, take. First, let us be reminded of those who take the side of evil frankly and thoroughly, gladly with energy

affirming the pleasures of brutishness, the agreeable aspects of sense and selfishness and sin. These are they who not merely yield to evil, but hurl themselves downward. Such people descend with incredible rapidity. We have all known one or two examples, alas, of this class. The war is soon over with them for the reason that evil triumphs so speedily. There are not for long any reprovings of conscience, for the tongue of conscience is, at the outset, torn out by the roots. This attitude toward the situation puts an end to the war within in very truth, but it does so as death puts an end to disease.

Still others take a spectator, non-committal position. They realize something of the struggle and they look on, not without interest, to see how it will come out—much as a sportsman leans sometimes on his gun to watch the upshot of an even fight between his dog and some wild beast. Or like Samson in his dallyings with the danger with which Delilah repeatedly threatened him,* they will wonder, at each conflict, what form of temptation or beguilement will offer itself next, making meanwhile no move to overcome or even to avoid the danger. Such persons will sometimes have a great deal to say about their faults and their virtues.

* Judg., chap. 14.

They can catalogue themselves often as well as any psychological novelist. But they never soil their hands by taking any part in the warfare between the flesh and the spirit. They look on—that is all! Now the result of this attitude, the far too common attitude of most men and women, is always the same if it be long persisted in. If we keep out of the fight, evil will wax and good will wane. The worse will push the better in us back, back, more and more, until at last our good, gasping, panting, will reach the point of practical extinction. As Scripture says—though in a different connection— "My spirit shall not always strive with man."

A third attitude toward the war within is taken by those who look on for a time to comprehend what it is all about. Then they quietly, firmly take their position on the right side, reinforcing with all the power that is theirs goodness, truth, beauty, "whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report." Those who take this attitude are at the furthest remove from mere spectators. On the contrary they make goodness and righteousness within them their especial task. They enter with vim and per-

sistence into a never-ceasing campaign against the forces of evil, against their own besetting temptations. And what is the result? At first the fight is all the hotter, the harder, the more intolerable. But as one keeps on, at length—after years it may be—the evil within one is driven back and overpowered, not slain but bound down, nailed living —to use the fine figure of St. Paul*—to a cross, a treacherous menace always, able to deal us many a foul side-blow at times, but yet on the whole subdued and put in the proper place of subjection. As life advances still farther, there is a growing peace, a peace not of defeat but of conquest. And all the while within each helper of good the spirit swells and develops from the size of the mustard seed to that which covers the heavens. And slowly, slowly, but really, the mark of the beast, which is on us all, fades and fades and fades.

Now the plain question we should each put to ourselves is, "Which of these three attitudes am I taking?" Or more simply, for it all comes to that, "Which side am I on? Am I aiding the evil or the good? Am I with the flesh or with the spirit?" The question is not which appeals to me most. Everybody, other things being equal, favors the good and the godlike. The real question

* Gal. 5 : 24.

is on which side am I fighting? It is not which do I like, but which do I love? It is not which do I want, but which do I will? It is not whether I mean well, but whether I am acting well. Oh! as we see this war may we not enlist on the divine side, once and for all fighting there, never giving up. That is the spirit which overcomes the world! That is the faith that attains victory!

Christian, dost thou see them
On the holy ground,
How the hosts of darkness
Compass thee around?
Christian, up and smite them,
Counting gain but loss;
Smite them, Christ is with thee,
Soldier of the cross.

Christian, dost thou feel them,
How they work within,
Striving, tempting, luring,
Goading into sin?
Christian, never tremble;
Never be downcast;
Gird thee for the battle,
Thou shalt win at last.

Christian, dost thou hear them,
How they speak thee fair?
"Always fast and vigil?
Always watch and prayer?"
Christian, answer boldly:
"While I breathe I pray":
Peace shall follow battle,
Night shall end in day.

"Well I know thy trouble,
O My servant true;
Thou art very weary,
I was weary too;
But that toil shall make thee
Some day all Mine own,
And the end of sorrow
Shall be near My throne."

THE SPONGING SPIRIT

DO you remember the servant in the parable who put the money his Lord entrusted to him in a napkin and buried it in the earth? The most sinful and disgusting aspect of that man's deed has never been, for me, his foolishness, but rather his small-mindedness! For it was not ignorance which might be pardonable, but currish, snappish aversion to being of any use that prompted his burying of his one talent. "Lord," he says, "I knew thee that thou art a hard man, reaping where thou didst not sow, and gathering where thou didst not scatter." It was mean dislike of his lord and unwillingness accordingly to do anything by which the master might be profited, which explains his action; and the severe punishment meted out to that action was aimed at his motive, so petty and so contemptible. He had been long cared for and supported by his lord very probably, so that it would have been but fair that he should have done his part now that some return to his lord was possible. But no! He had taken much, yet he would give nothing.

It is this sponging spirit from which I wish to draw our moral. The unsocial shirking of what he might have done and ought to have done appears

as it happens, in the keeping of money out of circulation. That reminds us immediately of those other spongers after a time of panic who in the same way hoard their resources, waiting, as they say, for "confidence" but doing nothing themselves to bring confidence again to the financial world. But quite apart from any such accidentally similar expressions of the same trait, the sponging spirit is to be seen in many different directions.

Look at those who live as to material matters not by their own labor but upon that of others. The idlers in general are of this type. Whether it be the tramp or the idle rich that does nothing, each is equally a drag on society, unjustly profiting by the toil of others. So the gamblers everywhere, whether their gambling is done with cards or wheat or stocks, are taking, to be sure, a little more pains than the idlers to sponge on the common store won by other men's labor. But at bottom their spirit is the same. They are seeking to get a share by chance of what self-respecting workers have earned by the sweat of their brow. So with the rascally incompetent work which is sometimes seen. Whether it take the form of grafting, in public officials, or of scamp work by a laborer at two dollars a day, matters not. It is all the same thing. It is taking money under false pretenses from the public.

Just who really foots the bill in such cases is not often known to anybody with any definiteness, least of all probably to the victim who really suffers. But this much is always certain. The man, who, with full consciousness of what he is doing, works at less than his full ability is making somebody carry just the burden which he has shuffled from his own shoulders. The essence of his fault is that he is not willing to do his full share. He is not, as the phrase goes, "worth his salt," but he takes it, all he can get of it. When the boys go coasting the thing is seen often in the pulling of the double-runner up the hill. Some boys tug at their ropes with a will. Others hold the rope taut but pull not an ounce. Still others will slyly jump on the sled for a moment—when the others are not looking—and be actually drawn up the hill, for a few moments of bliss. Perhaps that may illustrate the point here. The idlers are those who in some fashion have succeeded in getting upon the sled and are being drawn up the laborious hill of providing life's material necessities. The workers who do not do their best are those who walk indeed but do no real pulling at the ropes. Some sponge more than others, it is true, but all of this class are sufficiently disgusting. If I examine a sheep out in the field, lifting up the wool and looking close

to his skin, there will be seen very soon a sheep-tick like a whitish fester, distended, gorged, his chief organ a mouth, living on the life-blood and vitality of the host. It is a repulsive sight. A parasite is always an unlovely thing, on a sheep or in the world of toiling humanity. We should be unwilling and ashamed to have the name parasite applied to ourselves. But certain it is that every person not doing his full part in life—and it is not difficult to tell whether we are working to our full—is living on others and is precisely a parasite. This goes indeed deeper than we realize. There appeared not long since in one of our weeklies an article under the title "Have You Paid Your Board?" The substance of it was that however it may be as to our landlady's bill, if we have not given something really worth having to the world by what our occupation in life effects, then, no matter what we can afford and pay for, we are not giving a just equivalent for our food and drink—to say nothing about other ways in which we are kept alive and happy—in other words we have not "paid our board." This is a homely but accurate statement of the duty of us all if we are not to be, so far as our material needs are concerned, mere spongers upon society.

But supposing we are doing our full part so far

as the physical necessities are concerned. It is not even then certain that we are innocent of the sponging spirit. For even more common than the shirking of material tasks is the shirking of one's due moral contribution to the life of men. I can make that plain by saying at once that no man is doing his part morally speaking except somewhere, somehow, he is doing something positive and energetic—all that in him lies—for the moral bettering of life. How he shall do it does not so much matter. It may be by going into politics with a mission—such activity as Theodore Roosevelt suggests in his early book on *The Young Man in Politics*. It may be in Y.M.C.A. work. It may be done through some lodge or secret society or club in so far as the organization in question exists not exclusively for a good time, or as an end in itself, but as a means to a wider brotherhood and a deeper devotion to truth and virtue. Best and simplest of all it may be advanced in and through the church which, after all admissions have been made, is still the mightiest and most naturally working of all the agencies for blessing and saving society as individuals and as a whole. One may busy oneself through these or any other methods in so far as they are real efforts for bettering, in one way or another, the moral living of men. But

whatever the method or instrumentality, everybody owes to humanity a moral effort. Society will go down hill if it is not resolutely pushed up hill by human helpfulness. It is only because men like you and me have put their shoulders to the burden and lifted the world's ideas and ideals inch by inch, strainingly, perspiringly, that the world has its precious moral standards of living today. We all realize the value of these standards but some of us want to enter into other men's labors rather than to add our due share to those necessary moral efforts. You will find in every town and city men who have, they say, no time except for their business and their family. They can do nothing for any of the ideal-raising activities of their community. Sunday must be spent—so far as they do not use it in their offices—in sleep, lolling at home, or in a long tramp. Certainly they can spare none of it, none whatever, for church-going! And when a subscription-paper comes to them appealing for funds for a boy's club, or the Salvation Army or—worst of all in their eyes—for missionary work outside their city, they throw up their hands in indignant amazement. What! give of their hard-earned money for some object from which they will gather no tangible return? Impossible! Would they be willing to live for a

moment in a city which had no churches or Y.M.C.A. or other effort to keep life and morals clean and wholesome? Why, no! They want these activities to go on but they will do nothing to aid them. They want to profit by them with no labor on their part. What is this but the attitude of the parasite everywhere? Is it not clear that the spirit of the man who refuses to do anything for any of the good works which are afoot in his community—and there are many such men in every community—is not only a selfish but a sponging spirit? I know he doesn't realize it or intend it so, but that is what it amounts to.

Oh, let us see things as they are! Let us not be eternally letting things go and doing as little as we can. Somebody will have to work the harder and more intolerably because of our lighthearted remissness. Let us take no longer the tramp attitude of irresponsibility which comes so natural to us. But rather let us for very self-respect take the stand that we will share in all the work of the world, material, intellectual, moral, to the full extent that is due from us. Neither God nor man can ask more than that from us. But are we doing that? Are we parasites upon society, in some way or other profiting thanklessly by the toil of others, or are we really doing our part?

CENSORIOUSNESS

WE all have a blind eye so far as our own failings are concerned, but there are few who cannot perceive with hawk-like clearness the failings of others. It is a pity that this should be the case for as matter of fact every person that lives has his faults, and if we see these and, still worse, look for them and dwell upon them at every opportunity, we shall have plenty of material for harsh judgments of our neighbors.

How many of these cruel criticisms are passed every day! You will hear them in the home. What a habit there is about many a table of discussing and condemning practically everybody in the family's circle of acquaintance. There is too much of "I don't see why Mr. X doesn't buy his wife a new hat!" or "Did you ever meet such a self-conceited nobody as Mrs. Y?" and so on and so on. The only matter on which some families can seem to reach entire agreement is the disparagement of various people in the vicinity. The same censorious spirit is to be descried in what we call gossip, which is nothing more nor less than the picking up and brooding over and passing on of choice morsels of cruel judgment on some friend or colleague or neighbor. Look out the next time

that you are discussing some person you know, and take care lest that discussion degenerate into a dissection. Talking about people is very well. There is nothing more interesting, there is nothing more valuable in its place than men and women as a subject of conversation. But never, never think that you are really and adequately expounding an acquaintance when you are only cataloguing his or her faults! That is not the genial gazing and speculating upon our common humanity which we may well enjoy; that is judging—an attitude we have no right to take.

But it is young people who need perhaps far more than their elders to be warned against censoriousness. For the judgments of youth are often very hard indeed. Those of us who are older have because of that fact had considerable experience of life. We have fallen in the dust in some of our struggles with temptation. And even though we have usually come off victorious, we know how easily we might have succumbed and how peculiarly difficult it is to avoid all failings. We are more charitable and far less likely to judge harshly because we realize our own frailty. But the young people have not fallen before any serious temptations, they have not lived long enough. They have not yet known the bitterness of defeated

resolves or the dead weight of duty almost too heavy to bear. They can discern very plainly what men and women ought to be, they can see ideals with crystal clearness—that is a part of their glorious heritage of youth—but they have known till now little if anything of the toilsomeness of reaching those ideals which are so right and so obvious. How easy for the young person to judge bitterly those in the thick of a struggle of which he has no conception! Look out, young people, guard against judging, and especially in the case of those who are older and more heavily weighted down than yourselves, for your judgments at such times will be sure to be unfair and therefore the more inhuman. Judge not, that you be not judged when, ten years hence it may be, you make a worse failure than that you condemn today.

I should not be faithful to my theme, if I did not apply it in particular to one class of young people of whom we have many, many in our country in general and in our city in particular. The censorious spirit nowhere comes to its bloom so completely and so harmfully as sometimes among university students. It is not that they are naturally less kindly, but the conditions in which they are tend to render them censorious. In college, as all college students know, the mind is

trained and developed, and that means at once that the critical faculties are being polished and sharpened and pointed. One learns at college, one must learn if he is really being taught anything, to see flaws where flaws are, to detect fallacies, to search out true as opposed to apparent causes in physics, chemistry, biology, history, etc., to be aware immediately of inconsistencies in arguments and motives and literary workmanship. These are a necessary part of college training. Except the student become expert in such matters as these, he will scarcely become a rationally acting human being, unswayed, as every educated man and woman ought to be unswayed, by impulse or prejudice or popular contagion. Our students in college can never really grasp the true unless they know how to cast aside the false. Their minds must be taught to perceive and recognize clearly, piercingly, all the important factors of this world of things and men in which they are to live. Nothing need be said, or can be said against this process. Students are much the better for going through it.

But there is need to protest against the misusing of these critical faculties with which an education provides one. College young men and women are too often set up and made conceited by their newly

acquired penetration. They like to apply it to people and things where it is distinctly out of place. They too frequently emerge from a classroom criticizing their instructor when they ought to be trying to assimilate his novel point of view. They return from church pulling to pieces, all the way to their rooms, the congregation or the service or the sermon. If they attend a prayer-meeting they are often amused where they ought to have been edified. During vacation if they are so fortunate as to be at home again, how commonly they note and comment freely upon the ugly furniture or the inartistic arrangements of the house, and betweentimes they correct mother's grammar and father's manners to the bewilderment and distress of the parents whose hard toil and generous love have made college possible. University students should use their sharpened minds upon the problems of life, but too often they use them to hack at everything and everybody about them. As a boy with a new knife mars all the furniture of the schoolroom within reach for sheer joy in the possession of a new tool, so many a college youth, trying his criticism upon everything he sees, manages to scratch more or less everything about him. He becomes out of sorts and cynical and even believes sometimes that this all shows how bright and keenminded he is. If this goes to extremes, he will spoil

his environment and his happiness for himself by an overlavish and misplaced use of censoriousness. Worst of all he will isolate himself more and more from his kind, especially from those less educated than himself, because he will see increasingly all about him in every direction nothing but ignorance and vulgarity and faultiness.

Now this is all a mistake. The critical faculty is a valuable instrument but it ought not to be in use on every occasion. You students are not really masters of yourselves except you can keep this power dormant when it is not called for, which will be the great majority of the time. Never develop a faculty of cutting, sarcastic speech: cultivate rather the ability to be graciously, democratically companionable with anybody and everybody, high or low, educated or ignorant. Find out not only how to criticize people—anybody can do that, though not so skilfully as you—but how to live with men and women *without* criticizing them —a far greater achievement. Your trained mind is a sharp sword which is indispensable at certain junctures, but when it is not needed, keep it in its scabbard and it will be all the brighter, all the sharper, all the more telling when you do draw it forth. It is, believe me, just as important—and probably even more important—to learn when *not* to be critical as it is to be able, at the right time,

pointedly to criticize. See to it then that with all your keenness you know when to put it one side and to look at the world of men with unsophisticated, believing, loving eyes. As Scripture has it, "With all thy getting get understanding." If you do not succeed in that, you will be not the better but the worse for your acquiring of an education.

As with college students, so with us all. The censorious spirit is sometimes highly necessary. We ought to have it at election time when it is our public duty to vote according to the true inwardness of men and measures, or when we are asked for franchises affecting the public welfare. It ought to be present and active when one is looking for a pastor or a wife, or deciding upon a profession in life. But this testing, weighing, critical attitude should not be the regular point of view of any of us. After election be charitable, even though the other side did carry off the offices. After the franchise matter is settled, be hopeful! After you have called a pastor, support him! After marriage, or after you have become well settled in your trade or profession, be sure not to dwell on whatever unsatisfactory aspects may appear. Make the best of them, learning even to be oblivious of them.

Yet there is one place where the critical attitude is always in order. If you wish to use it, if you fear that it is in danger of becoming rusty, just use

it upon yourself. It is really needed there every day as it is not needed in the case of others. Act in the spirit which scrutinizes and tests and so rejects or accepts, with regard to your duties, your opportunities, your choices, not very often with regard to others' duties and opportunities and choices. Use your sharp penetrating insight upon your own character, upon your quibblings, your pretexts to avoid rightdoing, your weaknesses and blunders, not upon those of your neighbors. In a word, take the beam out of your own eye and be less troubled about the mote which may possibly be in your brother's eye! So far as your fellows are concerned, be able and ready to judge at the proper occasion, but let "Judge not!" be your daily motto and method. Be just with an inclination to mercy. Be charitable, be optimistic as to everybody but yourself. The result will be that you will be treated more justly, more charitably, more optimistically than you will have deserved or even expected. "For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured unto you." Leave to God ordinarily the bitter, thankless task of searching out and punishing the sins of men, and devote most of your time and energy to growing in grace and purity and usefulness and loving-kindness!

GOING WITH THE CROWD

DO you remember Peter's famous, or rather infamous, denial of his Lord? Why was it? Why did Peter refuse to admit that he was a follower of Jesus? Not because there was any particular danger to himself in the admission. Now that the Pharisees had the master, they would not trouble themselves to punish the disciples. Even though it had been a hazardous matter, Peter was never the man to shrink from peril. No, the fact was that the general sentiment of the company in which Peter found himself, the servants of the high priest's house, was not with but against Jesus; and Peter felt that and trimmed his sails accordingly. It was not that his love for Jesus had altered. He had no intention of sinning against him or his own profound affection for him. But he wanted to be a part of the current about him, so he went with it rather than against it. His fault there was precisely and plainly that of going with the crowd.

It is this weakness of going with the crowd which we might well consider and condemn, not in Peter so much as in ourselves. In how many ways we show this weakness! Take the reading with which we occupy ourselves. Who of us has read any

important author—Scott, or Dickens, or Milton, or Shakespeare—in the past week or even in the past year, save perhaps as a part of school work? And what have we been filling our minds with? Very probably with the newspapers, the fifteen-cent magazines, the novels of the day. We have been reading, that is, what the crowd is reading. This reading "with the crowd" is more widespread than many realize. The best recommendation most publishers can seem to make of a certain class of literature is to say in their advertisement of it that "everybody is reading it!" We have a magazine just at present that calls itself *Everybody's Magazine*, and no doubt that name in itself attracts tens of thousands of readers. In the great majority of cases average men and women in their reading do not seek out the best, do not choose for themselves at all: they simply "go with the crowd."

Look at the matter of fashions. I am aware that this is a delicate subject. Far be it from me, a mere man, to point the finger of scorn at the largeness of hats or the smallness of skirts. But something may be said on this subject in this connection. There is admittedly a value in respecting the prevailing modes to some extent. To wear clothing strikingly different from that of others argues not principle but crankiness. But after all

has been said as to the foolishness of utterly flying in the face of the fashions, it must yet be admitted that there is much slavishness in poring over and following into details what "they are wearing this year." Taken by and large, there is too little reference in the matter of wearing-apparel to the laws of beauty and too much to the laws of fashion. Have you never seen a garment which is not particularly becoming—which is in point of candid fact decidedly the reverse—worn because it is "the style"? This too is the sin of "going with the crowd"!

Nor can we of the other sex plume ourselves on our independence of behavior. We men go also in droves and far more—I sometimes surmise—than the women. Take profanity for example. It is less lurid nowadays than it used to be, but it is probably much more widespread among all classes, even the higher-thinking classes, of our country. So much so that present-day novels of contemporary life, even many of those written by the sex which never swears, are sprinkled, and often liberally, with profane expletives. Now I am free to say that this does not startle me when I see or hear it, as it seems to startle and even to horrify some of my fellow-Christians. I have worked alongside of men that were constantly and

unconsciously profane, and consequently I know very well that there is no blasphemy or even irreverence intended in most of the oaths we hear. The motive for them is ordinarily the desire to "go with the crowd." The men who use the capital D, which is the sum of profanity for most, use it because their fellows use it—only that and nothing more! The profane word does not shock me therefore by its abysmal sinfulness: it pains me by the lack of individuality and the downright weakness it betrays.

A similar judgment should be passed upon the use of tobacco, which is also far more common among all classes than it was formerly, and this not because more need it or even, I am disposed to think, because more really care for it, but again because it is a way of "going with the crowd." Men smoke, some of your best friends and mine tell us as much, for sociability, or "so as not to be odd." I have not the least intention of saying that smoking as such is wrong—that is a matter for each man to decide for himself—but to smoke merely to be one of "the crowd" is, to my mind, one of the poorest justifications for the habit that could be alleged. How often we have observed out of the corner of our eye the Freshman making painful efforts, efforts worthy of a better cause, to

learn to smoke. It turns his stomach. He takes no pleasure in it, much as he hopes he may in some dim future. Why then does he struggle so strenuously to harden himself to it? Why, simply for this: he sees a pipe hanging from the mouth of practically every Sophomore, and he wants to have a pipe hanging out of his silly head too. If he would be frank—and he often is as regards this—he would tell you that he really thinks it is "the thing" and that is his sole reason for trying to smoke. Now I can respect a man who likes to smoke and cannot see that it does him or anybody else any harm, and is bound to smoke, accordingly, whether you approve of it or not. I can respect that man for his independence of mind though I cannot say I am in the least attracted to go and do likewise. But to smoke merely and only because the crowd smokes is far from being the manly thing small boys and college men and sometimes even mature fathers of families frequently think. On the contrary, to have no opinion of one's own which one can and will stand by shows a lamentable lack of stamina. Follow your leader is a good game but a poor motto for life and life-habits.

Or look elsewhere. In the discussions and expressions of views which are always coming up, how easy it is to fall in with the generally current feeling and how hard to be and remain on the

other side. Do you invariably stand up and speak out what you think in your lodge, in your men's brotherhood, in your committee of whatever sort? At all events it is not a pleasant course to pursue. If you do not agree with the prevailing opinion, does it not frequently happen that you say nothing and even keep your seat when a vote is taken? Oh the courage there is in rising and voting alone, when the rest are to a man against you! But hard though it is, that is the vote that one can be sure means something. I always respect deeply, and so do you, the single dissident who is not afraid to go against "the crowd."

So with church-going in these latter days, when nobody feels any more a real obligation and duty to be involved. When the family say, one after the other, some Sunday morning, "I'm not going to church today," what do you say? Ah it is surely difficult, is it not, to reply with any other words than "Well, perhaps I won't go either." It is the person who, alone out of all the house, trudges off to service, who proves himself or herself to have real strength of character. That person's religion amounts to something for he has not staid at home "with the crowd."

Evil influences know and rely upon this tendency of human nature to "go with the crowd." See how the bosses use it to their own advantage.

Look at the smooth-running political machines which work almost automatically. Do we realize that they live, move, and have their being only because of our American disinclination to act alone? The great mass of Democrats will vote the democratic ticket and the great mass of Republicans will vote the republican ticket. There is too much, in the politics of too many men, of "my party, right or wrong." It is the stalwarts who make political machines possible. Professional politicians never take to the independents or insurgents of whatever sort they may be. They make fun of them, they caricature them, they jeer at them, they call them names, such as "mugwumps," "goo-goos," "theorists and dreamers," or often "Socialists." They urge everybody to "get on the band-wagon." But whatever the politicians may say and however their livelihood is endangered, it would be better for our country if more voters were mugwumps and goo-goos and all the rest. Our national affairs would be much better managed if "going with the crowd" in politics were to become less the usual thing than it still largely is.

Even the criminal classes of the community use now and then our proneness to "go with the crowd." The harm of it appears in darker colors

when we hear of an incident which was chronicled in the daily papers a year or two ago. It happened in New York on West 57th Street, or thereabouts. In broad daylight a passer-by was set upon by two thieves who clubbed him savagely and robbed him. All the while the windows and house-entrances were filled with frightened women and men, yes men! They all regretted the situation of the victim, they all would have been glad to help him in some way, but none dared to be the first to run to the rescue. So they watched, a frightened company—until the victim was dead and the robbers escaped, and all because every onlooker staid "with the crowd."

I have no wish to wear you out with illustrations. You grasp the idea already, I am sure. You may look at the large or at the small things of life. You may look in any direction you will. Everywhere you find that there is a subtle pull downward in "going with the crowd." It is weakening, it is dangerous, but it is very common. The fact is—and this is the philosophical basis of it all—we all of us will discover among our temptations the temptation to be average people. It is easy to have ideals and to live up to them if only they are the ideals of "the crowd." We do not beat our wives. We never play ball on Sunday. We not even dream

of mixing sand with the sugar. We go to church now and then, especially at Easter or Christmas and at other times when churches are thronged. We help charities about as is expected of us. We do what everybody does and we carefully avoid what everybody condemns. We are, as we sometimes say of ourselves, "as good as the next man." Ah there is a mighty tendency to be average people! But no man is developing, no man is all he should be except in some regards he rises above the average. If we intend to be of use to ourselves or, still more, to others, we shall have to do more than "go with the crowd." God asks you and me to be: not as good as our neighbor, but at times decidedly better; not like dumb, driven cattle, but firm, strong individuals with our own opinions and our own acts; not like Peter who could not endure being different, but like Jesus who came to do the will not of man but of his Father who is in heaven!

THE WORLD AS A PICNIC-GROUND

THERE are many people in this world who have gained somehow the idea that the meaning of life is summed up in the one word "pleasure." They look upon their existence and judge it as they would judge a concert, a game, a recreation. They sit back, that is, and expect to be amused, to be provided with a "good time" in every sense of the phrase. If they are rich, they buy pleasure —all they can procure! They spend their money freely on parties and luxuries, on pleasurings and jaunts all over this country and Europe. If in this way they are successful in enjoying themselves, they are perfectly satisfied. In so far as they are being pleasurably entertained for the passing moment, they ask nothing, literally nothing more from life.

If perchance they are only in comfortable circumstances, they cannot purchase their "good times" in quite the lavish fashion of the idle rich, but they do their best to that end. They are present at every amusement that offers itself in their city, avoiding all the more serious demands by saying: "Oh, I can't afford it," or "I haven't an evening to spare." No! they think they have not money or time, but they have sufficient of

both to join several clubs and lodges, being very careful to select those that exist purely for good-fellowship and pleasant surroundings.

Or if, unhappily for them, they are not in even moderately comfortable circumstances; if they are poor men and women compelled to do without most if not all of the enjoyments money can buy: then they take it out in sulking and finding fault. They feel themselves defrauded and they threaten to be anarchists or even to leave a world which refuses to them what it grants to others of luxuries and pleasures, and in some cases they do actually carry out their childish threats. How often such sullen, querulous moods come upon those who have but little! We all have experienced these feelings, aye, and yielded to them as we should not have yielded. There is, by the way, a long, skilful study of a sustained character of this type to be found in Mr. Thomas Hardy's most bitter and disagreeable novel entitled *Jude the Obscure*.

Now all such people—the pleasure-seekers and the pleasure-wishers alike—are committing a great error. That error lies not in what they do or feel; it lies not chiefly in their selfishness and ignoring of others: it is to be found in the idea, the fixed obsession which is upon them, that life is theirs for pleasure, and that it ought consequently to

yield pleasure, pleasure, pleasure, from one end of it to the other. Their mistake is that they are so absolutely sure that the world is a picnic-ground. It is this idea rather than anything they may say or do that should be attacked and refuted, for it is this which is the key to the whole situation. If the assumption of these persons is correct; if life was intended to be a long round of pleasure; if existence was meant to be one "grand, sweet song" and nothing more: then they are right in pursuing enjoyment first and foremost. If the world is a picnicking-place, then they are sensible to make life as much of a picnic as ever they can, and to curse God if the thing cannot be done. But if the world is not a picnic-ground? What if a "good time" is not the proper final end of existence? Why then, plainly, they and we too ought to know the fact and wake up to it!

In point of fact, the moment one begins to consider the question, that moment one must discard this axiom of the pleasure-seeker. First of all the best men, those recognized as the greatest ones of earth have never been the ones whose lives sought and attained most of pleasure. The great men of history have been those who were great in character and accomplished much in the service of the world. Nor need one appeal to great men par-

ticularly, in this respect. Anybody can settle this for himself from the people he meets every day. The pleasure-seekers are genial and agreeable. You can pass a few moments very pleasantly with them. But you don't respect them as you respect some others who do not know how to be a tithe as courteous and urbane. The pleasure-seekers of earth are, to tell the truth, a flabby, degenerate lot. One never dreams of seeking them out when one is in trouble or in real need of help of any kind. They are all very well in blue-sky weather, but in the storm and stress of human anguish they are as much out of place as a butterfly in a blizzard. They are not adapted to the world as the world on some days is, and that fact is one indication that the world is not the picnic-ground they take it to be. If it were what they assume, they would surely be among the greatest, the ablest, the wisest of its inhabitants!

Again, we may be certain the earth was not constructed as a pleasure-house, in that every attempt at pleasure as such so soon fails of its object. The pleasure-seekers not only fail to be the great ones of the world: they fail, worst of all, of the only end they set before them: they miss pleasure more than any other class of men and women. Strange, is it not, that the experts in pleasure should

succeed the least in finding it, but so it is! The life that consciously aims at "having a good time" will because of that very effort never, never really attain that end. The most discontented, unhappy men and women that I know and that you know are those that have struggled strenuously and spent all their substance in the search for enjoyment, and all in vain, while on the other hand, the most contented, happy people are those who have left the question of their own pleasure out of account all their lives. It is paradoxical but it is true that if you want to be happy, if you are desirous of having real pleasure and satisfaction in life, the first requisite is never to try to have it, always to ignore it utterly. This is a simple fact of life, a bedrock truth as to the world in which we live. Surely it lends no support to the idea that the world is meant for a picnic-ground. It seems, much rather to indicate that pleasure is not the "real thing" in this world, but only a subordinate matter—a mere dish of bonbons passed around between the acts of life.

But supposing both the considerations to which allusion has been made bore in the other direction. Supposing, ridiculous though the supposition is, that the most conspicuous characteristics of the greatest men were their pleasures. Supposing too

that a "good time" in life could be gained, as certainly it cannot, by direct effort after it. Yet even then, the world could not be assumed to be a mere picnic-place, for the fact would remain that pleasure is not a fit end and goal of this wonderful world of mankind. The dog has all he wants if he has pleasure; he wags his tail in deep content as he gnaws his bone; but we are not dogs. The bird desires nothing more as he sings with pleasure in the sunshine "tuning his merry note"; but we are not birds. We all have a degree of pleasure in good food, in good company, in good fooling; but pleasure like this, good enough in its place, cannot suffice us permanently. We are soon cloyed if this be all. The healthy normal human being wants also—he will in time insist on having—exercise, effort, work. Sooner or later every man comes to realize that life with nothing but itself to live for is not worth living at all! Pleasure satisfies for the moment, but men of experience, yes, even men of pleasure, discover at last that the life that saves itself has lost itself, and that he who loses his life, letting it go for some noble cause or in some other fashion for the good of others, has alone saved it, has alone really lived a life worth anything even to himself. Pleasure is all very well but it is not sufficient occupation for men that are men, and

for women that have wakened to a true knowledge of what womanhood is.

The world is not a picnic-ground because it is something far, far better. It is a gymnasium for the hardening of our spiritual muscles. It is a race-track to develop our powers of endurance. It is an arena where we may meet and buffet and lay the specters of brutishness and selfishness within and without us. It is a university where we are taught, sometimes by easy things, more often by hard exigencies and tasks, what life is and ought to be. There are many many metaphors which apply most patly to the world in which we are, but whatever else the world may be, it never is a mere picnicking-place! Do not dally with that assumption. Put that out of your mind once for all. May your dreams be of something more vital, more manly, more womanly than pleasure! Never allow yourself to act as though you were seeking to be able to say at the ending of life, "It has all been very pleasant and entertaining." Do not live with the apparent aim of saying at the last what Mr. Roosevelt declared, in a flippant mood at the close of his term of office, "I've had a corking good time!" No, no! so act, so live that you may cry out with truth at the last, with Paul, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith!"

THE SIN OF EXCLUSIVENESS

EXCLUSIVENESS takes many forms—some of them obvious, some of them not so obvious. There is first, social exclusiveness, that pettiest form of exclusiveness which refuses to associate with people outside one's set. Men and, more often, women will say they do not care to enlarge their circle of acquaintance. They will put up barriers to keep apart themselves, their children, their family, from others—"out-siders" as they call them. They will attend over and over the most inane and wearisome of teas and receptions and be happy through them all because, as they assure one another in asides, "This is a most exclusive affair!" Despite all pretensions, this sort of behavior is nothing more nor less than the old dog-in-the-manger selfishness. It clings to what others have not, for no reason in the world except that others have it not. It reminds one of the spirit of the older theology of a hundred and fifty years ago, which asserted that the joys of the redeemed in heaven will be heightened by the clear view they will have of the miseries of the damned! The joys of society are for some narrow souls much like that, the only difference being that those who are shut out from such "exclusive" gatherings are not at all miser-

able. In fact, unless they are infected with the same unsympathetic spirit, most normal men and women prefer to be outside rather than inside that which delights to call itself the "exclusive circle." We harm others to a degree by marking out dividing lines and laying so much weight upon the matter of belonging to "our set," but we hurt ourselves incalculably more by making our lives thus narrow and dwindling and insignificant. After all, social exclusiveness is not so much wrong —though of course it is that—as it is foolish and ridiculous. The proper reply to it is not argument but uncontrolled Homeric laughter!

This matter of cliques and limited coteries is, however, of rare occurrence if one takes all mankind into account. Those insufferable personages who turn up their noses at ordinary people are but few and far between. The average city-dwellers, the average men and women we meet every day in the store, on the street, in the electric car, know no such deep-lying distinctions and separations. They feel together. They help each the other in case of need. They have in general a glowing and precious sense of social solidarity. We are not our own! Most of us are aware of it and are the better for it.

More common than social exclusiveness is what

may be called exclusiveness in enjoyment. I refer to the luxurious appreciation of the good things of life joined with an utter forgetting and constant ignoring of others to whom such luxuries, and often many a necessity also, are impossible. There is poverty, misery, soddenness, in this world of ours. Those who are awake thrill to such reminders as the following, of which there are many nowadays:

> I see humanity scattered over the world, depressed, conflicting, unawakened. I see human life as avoidable waste and curable confusion. I see peasants living in wretched huts, knee-deep in manure, mere parasites on their own pigs and cows. I see the grimy millions who slave for industrial perfection. . . . . Their disorder of effort, the spectacle of futility fills me with a passionate desire to end waste, to create order, to develop understanding.*

but how many there are in this present age who are *not* filled with that "passionate desire" of Mr. Wells, who are oblivious of any need for sympathy and assistance. Our cities are filled with men and women who spend money to the right and to the left lavishly, for apartments filled to overflowing with conveniences and fine furniture, for rich food and entertainments and travel, for themselves from first to last. They do not possess everything they would like—who does?—but they have much that others have to do without, and the deprivations

* H. G. Wells, quoted in R. B. Perry, *The Moral Economy*, p. 167.

of those others never occur to them for a moment. In how many hotels of pampered luxury, in how many comfortable residence-communities, in how many happy homes of America, is there to be observed an all-absorbing devotion to the comfort of oneself and one's family, and an entire ignorance and lack of interest so far as everything and everybody else is concerned. This too is an outcropping of the sin of exclusiveness! I do not say what we should do. I do not say with Tolstoi that we should put aside all our luxuries. But I do say that we should be conscious of others as well as of ourselves. I do believe that we err if we are unaware of others' troubles and are thus neutral and unsympathetic in view of the terrible social problems which exist, whether we overlook them or not. To enjoy unthinkingly is a cruelty and a sin, perhaps unconscious but no less real.

Again the sin of exclusiveness is committed, as it seems to me, in the exaggerated idea of personal ownership which is very widely current in many quarters and which is in many respects one of the "idols of the market-place" of our time. Men have the feeling, multitudes of them, that what a man owns is his to use absolutely as he pleases. He inherited it perhaps. That settles it! He can hoard it, he can corner wheat with it, he can throw

it to the dogs, just as he sees fit! He has a perfect right to do with it according to any wish or even caprice which for the moment is in the saddle. Still more is this felt to be obvious when the fortune in question was laid up by its present possessor. Many a "self-made" millionaire—as the phrase goes—will reason in somewhat this wise: "I earned this money of mine dollar by dollar. I made it by my own hard efforts. I know I ought to be decently charitable now and then of course, but when one reaches the bedrock facts of the case, my houses, my stocks, my bank-accounts are absolutely, utterly, irrevocably mine. Mr. Carnegie may give away all he has before he dies, as he seems to intend, if he is so disposed. Kennedy may leave his possessions to various boards for the public good, if that is where he wishes his money to go. But what's mine's my own! I will use it for myself while I live, and I will leave it entirely to my family after I am gone and it is nobody's business!" How is it as to such reasoning? Is it not true that every considerable fortune rests back upon the social foundations? Could it come into existence without the protection, the laws, the policing of government? Suppose there were no Christian civilization with its mutual forbearance, its social consciousness, its

sense of justice: could any great fortune under such circumstances be earned or saved or used? So when the rich man says, "This which I hold is mine!" he is legally correct, but morally incorrect. "Ye are not your own!" In the eyes of God neither a man nor still more his possessions are exclusively his to do with as he sees fit.

Let me illustrate this which may be called property-exclusiveness by two applications. Look first at the conflict, all too frequent in these days, between capital and labor. Labor asserts often, for example, to itself if not publicly, "We have a right to as few hours' work at as high wages as we can get. Our labor is our own! We will sell it therefore in the dearest possible market!" There is, is there not, a sense in which the workingman should take to heart the words, "Ye are not your own!" Yet it must be added that labor has been so often and so long oppressed and exploited, that if it did not cherish exaggerated claims, it would not gain many of its undoubted rights. So that the classic and inexcusable exclusiveness in this conflict is to be discovered rather with the capitalist who when a strike occurs, treats with his men for a time, and then loses his temper and throws down the gauntlet in some such words as, "This business is mine! It is for me to say whether it is to

be an open or a union shop! I shall pay what wages I think best and I shall take no dictation or advice of any kind. There's nothing to arbitrate!" Now such a claim to exclusive control is based on an erroneous idea. Capital owns the factory or the mine or the railroad, it is true; capital is necessary to keep the business moving: but capital is not the only necessity, it is not consequently the only partner in the transaction. How long could any industry continue if there were no employes? How long would it be profitable—we are just beginning to grasp this aspect of the situation—if there were no consumers? All three, capital, labor, consumer, and ultimately society itself are concerned in every battle between workers and employers, and therefore all three and society above all must have a voice in the matter. "Ye are not your own!" Let great businesses heed the words.

A second application of the thought is possible as regards this same subject of private ownership's exclusive claims. I refer to the mooted rights of property in matters of legislation. The holding of property and its protection is certainly in many ways wise and necessary. Government everywhere sees here a real and important function to be performed. But property as such is not, so far as the government is concerned, an end: it is,

properly speaking, a *means* to such values as thrift, prudence, self-respect, responsibility. The rights of property are real and unquestionable so long as it furthers these, but the fact of possessing property confers no final and inalienable privilege upon the property-holder. Government exists not for property, but for man, and wherever the rights and privileges of property conflict with the rights of man there is no question which must yield. "Ye are not your own!" That is a necessary governmental maxim which should be commended to the notice of selfish property-holders. The Lords of England may grieve over the recent budget. They may call it confiscation to impose a tax upon their lands. But they are mistaken in their contention, mistaken because their thousands of unutilized acres are not finally and absolutely theirs. So with the outcry against publicity and liability laws for corporations, against governmental regulation of freight rates, etc., etc. They are termed sometimes "unwarrantable intrusions" and "meddlings with business." They are that however only if business is "its own." But that is the very point! In God's sight no business, no corporation, no man or body of men is its own. Government is just coming within sight of the divine truth upon this question. Property is not

a "crime" as certain socialist thinkers have asserted. But property, if hugged to oneself, will decay as the manna in the wilderness decayed over night. Property if regarded as literally and under all circumstances one's own, in defiance of government regulations and the public welfare, property at such times may be not a "crime," but a sin—the sin, in short, of exclusiveness. Before God, and sooner or later in law too, men will have to recognize and concede that they exist and their possessions accumulate, not for themselves and their own pleasure alone, nor for the sense of power which the brandishing of wealth affords to them or their families. Men are and have simply and only that they and all men may grow in grace and manhood and the possibilities of life.

Do we not begin to see the scope, the sweep of the sin of exclusiveness? "Ye are not your own!" To regard oneself as separate, self-sufficient, self-possessing, is to divide man from man. It is to rend the unity in which "God hath made of one blood all men that dwell on the face of the earth." To be exclusive, whether it be in a narrower or a broader sense, is to withdraw oneself from the current of broad human brotherhood and sympathy and responsibility; it is to live such lives as men were never meant to live; it is to put asun-

der what God hath joined together. We are all "in the same boat": rich and poor, wise and ignorant, happy and miserable. We are members one of another. We are not our own! We must seek to achieve not for ourselves only, but for all, life, happiness, manhood, womanhood. We proclaim no longer the equality of men. Men are not equal; they never were and they never will be! We do not emphasize nor pursue any such chimera. But there is an equality the Christian will and must, by virtue of his Christianity, insist upon. It is the equality of moral life and freedom. It is the equality of proper education. It is the equality of start. It is the equality of opportunity for every varying individual to develop what he is and what he can do, according to the plan God put within him. That sort of equality of men is the goal, not of the poor and ignorant, not of those who are down, alone, but of us all. We are not our own! We belong each to the rest. We seek not our own welfare or character most. No! we seek the right life of all. Our aim is not individual but social salvation!

THE STRUGGLE FOR SUPERFLUITIES

JESUS said once that a man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth. But there are, for all that, all too many who think so. The wealthy with their lavish display, their extravagant recreations, their ostentatious spending—they are, some of them at least, of the firm opinion that a man's life does consist in the abundance of the things which he possesseth! The investor with his money at work in this or that corporation is sometimes guilty of thinking so. There is the reason why trusts and syndicates are at times so unscrupulous in manipulating the laws and some of the legislators; so cruel upon the children; so ruthless in demanding more production and in "speeding up," whatever betide. Corporations have, it is said, no souls, and apart from past watering of stock, the cause of it very frequently is the average investor who insists upon dividends, dividends and ever more and higher dividends. Such investors are of the opinion that a man's life does decidedly consist of the abundance of the things which he possesseth! There is a type of politician who thinks so. It is the politician who "stands pat" for his own or his constituents' gain. He dares

not oppose the financial powers that be, not even for the public good. He votes a tariff on wool which brings hardship upon the poor and he votes down the parcels post which the nation sorely needs—all these and other harmful deeds he is sometimes guilty of because, as one of his ilk in New York once declared, he is "working for his pocket all the time!" His belief beyond a doubt is that a man's life consists in the abundance of the things which he possesseth.

More important than all the rest, the everyday man is too prone to think so. See how he estimates his acquaintances, looking not at the talents of a man but at his salary, not at his character but at his income, not at his value to the community but at his stocks or lands or mines. Is it not much too significant that, for common parlance, a man is "worth" just the amount of his convertible securities, no more and no less! The life-ideal of too many young men is to have money and the life-ideal of too many young women is to have the things money can buy—the more the better. It is a prevalent belief—you will see it appearing if you will watch the deeds of those about you and sometimes, I fear if you will watch your own deeds —it is a commonplace of this world we inhabit, that a man's life consisteth of the abundance of

the things which he possesseth! It is on this account that this generation is often called, and with much truth, materialistic: not because it is occupied largely with material things, but because it is occupied with little else; not because it seeks and toils for physical necessities but because it seeks and agonizes for more and more things *ad infinitum!*

The vital mistake in all this mad rush for things lies not in the effort after things as such but in the quantity of things desired. It is obvious that everybody must have various things if he is to live physically at all. A person must plainly earn a certain minimum income if that person's life is to be on a plane above that of the brutes. The struggles of men and women to earn a livelihood are justifiable and praiseworthy. Similarly the aim of social workers and publicists to raise the standard of living of the poor and the submerged and the improvident is in no wise to be branded as materialistic: it is on the contrary prompted and continued by a most noble and useful idealism. A modicum of possessions is decidedly necessary to human existence—necessary because we are not souls only but bodies with bodily needs also. It is not the effort for things that should be condemned. Jesus has nothing to say against that

effort in the words I have cited or anywhere else. Life consists partly of things. Jesus has no thought of denying it. What he affirms is that life does not consist of the *abundance* of the things one possesses. We must all pay considerable attention to the things we need, but, Jesus implies, we should take no particular interest in having more than we need. When our income suffices, when our souls are not stunted by the lack of any material necessities, then things should cease to have importance for us, then the straining soul and body for more things is foolishness pure and simple. Is it not true? We can see a justification for the grim earnestness with which a father will strive to earn or even, if that be impossible to beg or steal a loaf for his starving little ones. But can we see any excuse for that man living in luxury who lets himself be bribed by from $800 to $1000 —a thing which has occurred in more than one state of our country of late! We can comprehend how a factory-hand on wages of $8 or $10 a week, might do extra work nights even to the injury of his health, in order that he might keep a promising son in school. But can we quite admire the common sense—to say the least—of others who take on heavy additional burdens merely because they cannot afford, as they think, to let go this or that

opportunity for money-making? Financial considerations may move, ought in fact to move a person in actual poverty, but that they should influence men who are in no sort of pressing need is simply indefensible.

The sad fact nowadays is precisely this, that so many of the sharp, crooked, corrupt doings in business and in politics are pushed through not by the indigent but by the well-fed, not by those that have nothing but by those who have already considerably more than is good for them. There is an earnest striving for the necessities of life in these days, but it is small in comparison with the effort to pile up heaps of money for the spending of degenerate sons and daughters. There is a bitter cry of the poor for bread, and the cry moves us to pity and charity, but the most clamorous chorus just now is not for bread but for *cake!* There is a struggle for existence and hard and grinding it is, but the struggle for existence is nothing to the struggle for superfluities! The toil in many quarters is not for things but for an abundance of things somehow, anyhow! Covetousness is the very meaning of life to multitudes of people in this generation, high and low, rich and middle-class alike.

A yearning for the superfluous will not cure

itself. There are some desires which have natural limits. The hog has a mighty appetite, he wants more and more and more food, but he cannot devour indefinitely. There is a point reached at last where he can contain nothing further. He dislikes to cease, his whole hoggish being protests against it, but he must give over for the time. Gluttony has its natural limit set. But there is no limit to covetousness. People in ordinary circumstances can spend, in one way or another, all the money they can lay their hands on. And even though one is wealthy to such an extent that one's income swamps the possibility of spending it, yet money can, even so, be hoarded and invested absolutely without end. There is no automatic check to the struggle for superfluities. It would be advantageous for humanity if there were, but there is none! Covetousness never ceases of itself; it only grows by that it feeds upon. The only method of being rid of it is for each one to crush it within himself.

It may assist our resolute hostility to this sin if we consider two reasons why men should put away their strugglings for unnecessaries. There is, first, the selfish motive. Covetousness is nothing more nor less than folly. All this desire for more and more and more things is a desire for

what will add nothing to life or liberty or happiness. Men are not really better or worse off in proportion as they have greater or less abundance of things. Our wealthiest men are not our most enviable citizens. Look at Mr. Rockefeller to whom our minds naturally recur when one speaks of rich men. Mr. Rockefeller has laid up, with infinite pains, hundreds of millions of dollars and now, for he means well, he has come in sight of the no less weary task of dispersing what he can of that money, with no less infinite pains! Would it not have been better—from a merely selfish standpoint, to say nothing of any love for mankind —not to have laid up that immense fortune in the first place? As with the wealthy, so with us all. You cannot rate men, in value or even in happiness, according to their abundance of possessions. And you, yes you yourself, doubt it as you will, would be no more useful and no more acquainted with the joy of living if you had more things than you have now—supposing, what is probably the case, that you are not in actual poverty. A man's life consisteth not in the abundance of the things which he possesseth! It is a crazy gluttony, a silly mania, this desire for more and more things without end.

Again there is against covetousness not only the

appeal to self-interest: there is the appeal to one's regard for one's fellows. For the sake of our times we should crush covetousness. Do we realize as we should, that it is the struggles of men like you and me for things that are unnecessary that render money the sinister foe of human welfare it has in many cases become? Most men, almost any man, will respond with startling suddenness to the offer of more money. Whether one is really in need of it or not, that bait is usually profoundly attractive and stirring. And therefore, *therefore*, money is a power, one of the greatest powers in these United States today. Money is not in itself, you see, a mighty social force. It becomes so only because we all want it, more of it without any limit. We ought not to find financial advantage so altogether irresistible as we do. We know at heart that we ought not, for we grasp at once the greatness of a man who rises superior to his pocket-book. There was Professor Agassiz, a Harvard teacher, who represents the spirit of that oldest and best of our universities much better than some parts of our country realize. Professor Agassiz was approached one day, so the story goes, by a lecture agent and invited to tour the country delivering a series of addresses which it was certain, in view of his fame, would be largely attended.

Professor Agassiz excused himself, referring to press of work and investigations. "But," urged the manager, "this will mean a large sum of money for you!" "I have no time to make money!" was the prompt reply. Do we not stir instinctively to the noble spirit of that response? Suppose we all not only admired but exemplified that same spirit; suppose we desired merely a reasonable scale of living; suppose the average man having sufficient food and clothing and shelter were to reply to proffers of more money, to bribes and financial allurements of every description, "I don't need and I don't want your money!" Suppose in short, that money should lose its universal appeal: why then is it not clear that the power of money would shrink at once to a mere ghost of its former self? It would still be mighty in the material and physical world, but it would lose in that instant its potency and prestige so far as mankind is concerned. Men would no longer sell their very souls to acquire it and consequently many of the evils of these times would vanish away. The adulterations of foods, extortionate prices, political jobbery, the saloon business, the "white slave" traffic, indecent plays, and brutalizing yellow journalism—all these and many other abuses like them would have no reason for existing and would

cease to be instantly, for they are all due to somebody's, everybody's, desire for more money. If ordinary men did not want money and the superfluous things money will buy, more and more and more of them, then money would not be the prize of everyday life, the symbol of success it is at present, and strong men would no longer pile it up as they often do now, to the harm and injury of every citizen of the land.

This is all a dream and a mere utopia, no doubt. As things are, men are moved powerfully by the prospect of cash returns and will be so moved for a long time to come. But though that is quite true, it is also true that every individual who puts aside a mad rush for superfluities, as regards himself, has lessened the baleful allurement of money to just that degree. He has cast his weight at least against the appeal of more things, and in favor of man and God. And let us remember this: until the nobler and better-minded people decline, on principle, to live for an abundance of things, there is little hope that the great mass of mankind will do so. Men should abhor covetousness for the sake of their times if not for themselves, for the good of their weaker fellows if not for very self-respect! The struggle for superfluities, the insatiable desire for increased possessions is a life-

meaning of our day and of many more of us than probably realize it. Oh, why may not the right-intentioned and higher-thinking elements of the community in their comfortable homes, why may not you and I rise above money considerations? Why cannot a few of us at all events realize once for all that our lives are not to be measured and ought not to be swerved by the possibility of possessing a greater abundance of material things? Let us do our part that ours may not be of those nations "where wealth accumulates, and men decay"!

THE SHEEP AND THE GOATS

THE separating of men into two classes, the one called sheep and the other goats is in a parable of Jesus conceived as done by the Son of Man and as occurring at the end of the world. Such a classifying of men, so far as the Bible goes, is by implication, therefore, not the province of the average man nor, even if it were, a matter of the present time. Yet the division of men into sheep and goats has gone merrily on from the beginning of things. It is an industry which has never known apparently any dull times. Men have ever been and still are labeling their fellows most unwarrantably and most cruelly.

Historically a most interesting résumé might be made of the various methods and results of dividing people into sheep and goats. It teases one's thought merely to mention a few instances. There was the old Jewish belief in their nation as "the chosen people" over against the heathen. Springing from that as a root appears the later arrogance of the Jew which especially expressed itself in his aversion and scorn for the Samaritan, and the gentile in general. In St. Paul, reaching back to the same origin, but christianized, the foreordination of the righteous was mentioned and rejoiced

in, but with no thought whatever of asserting that the unrighteous were also foreordained to be such, so that we may absolve this liberal thinker from the hateful division of men into sheep and goats. Yet on this Pauline foundation Calvinism in time came to teach the harmful, pitiless doctrine that a few are the elect while the great majority are the non-elect, or to put it positively as Calvinism had no hesitation in doing, some are predestined for salvation but more, a vast number more, are foreordained for hell-fire. Is not this plainly a division, presumptuous and premature, of men into the sheep and the goats? Nor was this cruel procedure limited to Jewish and Christian history. It appears, and far more harshly in other quarters. There was the distinction in classical antiquity between Greek and barbarian, and between Roman citizen and freedman. Most sharply the thing is found in India of the past and the present, where the inhuman institution of caste with its innumerable gradations is interwoven into the very bases of society.

Not that these dividings-off of men have not been challenged. They have been condemned and bitterly attacked sooner or later at every stage in every historical case. Among the Jews of the Old Testament times, it was the prophets of Israel who,

in the teeth of an overwhelming public opinion and prejudice, exalted Jehovah as the God not of Israel or Judah only, but as the God of the whole earth! Among the Greeks and Romans, it was the Stoics who most prominently and effectively championed the universal brotherhood of man, which they called "cosmopolitanism." In India too one of Buddhism's most important aspects is its noble uncompromising protest against caste distinctions and its refusal to recognize the system for a moment. In the realm of Christian doctrine also, thank God, the Wesleyan insistence upon the free and universally proffered grace of God furnished a much-needed retort to the intolerant Calvinistic doctrines of election and reprobation. Most important of all, Jesus in his life, and in the spirit of his words and deeds, refused flatly to accept the Pharisaic division of men into saints and sinners, religious people and those outside the pale. Jesus went about doing good to all, to the so-called "evil" as much as to the so-called "good," to the Pharisee and to the publican alike, to those that thought themselves righteous and to those that knew themselves to be sinners. It was one of the stock accusations against him by his enemies that he ate and drank and associated not with the rich and cultivated only, but with the despised

and the outcasts. He came, he himself said in reply to an innuendo of this sort, precisely to call sinners to repentance. He preached his gospel, hopefully and nothing doubting, to the poor, the neglected, the evil elements of the society of his day. He fanned the spark of manhood in those whom the religious leaders of the people had condemned and ostracized. He even respected and so awoke the womanhood of harlots. Always during his life among men, he declined unhesitatingly and absolutely to give up any man or woman, whatever his or her character or condition or past. In a day when the sheep were all neatly fenced off from the goats, he ignored and ran athwart the whole cruel arrangement. Men for him were not sheep—all good, nor goats—utterly hopeless. Men were for him human souls, capable of the best and of the worst, all of them without exception needing to be roused to higher things and all of them able to follow the truth and be his disciples—if they would. The best men in all ages and Jesus above all at their head have branded sheep-and-goat judgments of men as false and harsh.

Yet despite all this which may be called with truth the revelation of God on the subject, the tendency to classify men as either sheep or goats has persisted through the past and is present at

this moment in our world and even, alas, in you and me. It appears in political arguments at well-nigh every election. We are all acquainted with the party man who sees nothing but high-mindedness in his party and its candidates and nothing but folly and self-seeking in the opposition. For some Republicans all Republicans are sheep and all Democrats are goats, while on the other hand for some Democrats the same classification is used, only that the labels are reversed. And in general the "stalwart" or "straight-ticket" voter is wrong in his underlying principle, which is—whether he realize it or not—that men are, politically speaking, either sheep or goats. It is the independent, the "ballot-scratcher" who is looking for able men of principle and votes for such, whichever party name they may chance to bear, who is the most useful citizen, and precisely for the reason that he has risen above sheep-and-goat judgments.

The tendency is seen in that deep problem, in that deep sin we can scarcely avoid terming it, which we call race-prejudice. The essence of race-prejudice is that men of a particular color or racial stock are, by virtue of that single fact, regarded and treated as irretrievable outcasts. Whatever their high principles or talents, they are, says race-prejudice, pariahs and must remain apart from us

and, most cruel of all, they must renounce the highest possibilities and opportunities of human development. On the other hand whatever the white man's weaknesses and vices, he is and must ever be exalted above the negro, or the Jew, or the Chinaman. Is not this obviously the same cruel and mistaken dividing of men into sheep and goats? We condemn it in the Pharisee or the Calvinist, why not condemn it also where it appears, as in this problem, in ourselves?

The tendency crops out in the church when Christians—so-called at least—regard their denomination as so absolutely correct and divine in every detail that they believe every other denomination to be, as a matter of course, utterly and entirely in error. Some Protestants take that attitude toward other protestant branches of the church. Every Protestant denomination has some adherents who despise the Roman Catholic, or at least are sure that his religion has in it nothing but lies and conspiracies and devices of the evil one. On the other hand Roman Catholic authorities by papal pronouncement and essential doctrine, view Protestants as such, so long as they remain outside the Roman Catholic fold, as unmitigated and irredeemable heretics. Men in the church, as out of it, are often, we may rejoice to realize, better than

their theories, but such theories as these wherever found, among Protestants or Roman Catholics alike, are narrow, intolerant, insufferable, and insulting divisions of men and still worse of Christian brethren into sheep and goats.

Perhaps the sheep-and-goat classification is used most frequently and most pointedly however in the moral judgments we make upon the individuals with whom we have relations of various kinds. We are forever regarding our vices and those of our friends as venial and unimportant, while we condemn other men's failings as inexcusable and shocking. Ourselves and ours are to our thinking sheep, while those others are most contemptible goats. The other man's vices may be of various types. Perhaps he is addicted to some bad habit or he may cherish wrong political ideas or employ harmful methods. It may be his occupation or his antecedents which are at fault. But whatever it be, the fact is that, for many of us, there is no good and no possibility of good in many of the men we meet every day. We all have a decided tendency for example to regard as bad in every particular the person who drinks now and then, or is connected with grafting, or fights, or has fought on the side of the saloon or corrupt politicians. Now these deeds are all of them evil, they are

weak, dangerous spots in any man's record, but they do not make a man a dog or a devil, with no possibility of reformation, with no goodness in him as vital and remarkable in its way perhaps as our own. Such men are often our enemies and that affects our judgments. One need not and should not cease opposing them in so far as they are standing for anything which is injurious to the public welfare. Every man on the wrong side of every important question is and ought to be your enemy and mine. But do not fight a man of this type *excepting on those points where he is in the wrong*, else you are putting yourself in the wrong! Above all never hate them, do not cast them into the outer darkness so far as you are concerned; beware, in a word, of branding them as goats! Jesus bade us love our enemies. That does not mean to surrender to them, nor to call their evil good. It does mean that we should be fair to them, open-minded to any and every good in them, treating them like brothers, even though erring brothers.

Sheep-and-goat moral judgments of men! I warn you against them! They have done infinite harm in the world! They have stiffened and reinforced spiritual pride and ministered to that detestable spirit with which one thanks God that one is not as other men! They have hardened and

crushed and destroyed many a soul that might have been saved otherwise. Most clinching of all the indictments against this classification of men, sheep-and-goat judgments are not harmful only: they are false, they are at variance with the facts. Men may, in another life possibly—as the parable suggests—become sheep and goats in earnest, but in this life which we are now living, no man is hopelessly bad and none is impeccably good. On the one hand we are all miserable sinners in some aspect or another, while on the other hand we all, even the worst, reflect somewhat of the glory of God in our poor clay. We are every one of us in possibility *both* sheep and goats! Really to grasp that fact—few of us have done so as yet—would have a most profitable double effect upon us. It would at once immeasurably increase our humility as regards ourselves, and it would, still better, deepen our respect as regards our neighbors.

SOME UNREGARDED MISERS

HOARDING has ever been a common human failing. This is so characteristic indeed of men that our greatest writers have frequently recurred to descriptions of misers. Shakespeare with his "Shylock," Molière in *L'Avare*, Balzac in *Eugénie Grandet*, George Eliot in *Silas Marner*, all these and many more have pondered from differing standpoints upon the miser type. We have all read and enjoyed one or another portrayal of this clear-cut vice. I venture to suggest, however, that we have never dreamed that we ourselves are, quite possibly, guilty of this very fault. For if we will but consider what miserliness at bottom is, we shall come to see that a miser is not necessarily one who has somewhere a secret hoard; he is not, as a matter of course, one who pushes his fingers voluptuously through a pile of gold-pieces, gloating over the glistening luster of his "yellow-boys." These characteristics are all found in the commonly read descriptions of misers, I know, yet they are but external and non-essential. The essence of a miser is that he puts the means of life above life. The miser as such is one who forgets deeply and shamefully the truism that life is more than the food which nourishes life and therefore

he squanders his effort, his interest, his love, first, last, and always upon the means of life, ignoring all the while life itself, the meaning which alone gives value of any kind to any means of life. Misers differ according to the means of life they most affect, but the fundamental axiom of miserliness—it is expressed in actions instead of in words—is not, as Jesus says, "the life is more than the food," but precisely the opposite: the food is more than life! It is incredible that anybody should really think so, but the miser builds his life upon that assumption.

Now if this be the definition of a miser, then misers are all about us beyond a doubt. Look with me at some of the unregarded ones of this present day. First of all one must at least mention those that pile up money, not in any hidden hoard, but in investments, real-estate, bank-accounts, and the like. How many business men there are who keep on earning money when they have more already than they can ever spend, much less use. They do this largely, I am well aware, because they are acquainted with nothing else with which to occupy their time. But, strange though it may seem, there are other things to do in the world beside the making of money! The practical betterment of the town in which one lives, the social

uplift of certain degraded classes, the spreading of needful information and better methods of living, the entering with heart and soul into some worthy cause, such as organized charities, the Y.M.C.A., the missionary conquest of the world, world-wide peace. These and many similar activities near and far are ever clamoring for workers and most of all—for they are all sadly in want of money—workers who will serve without remuneration. You of Colorado, who have come to this glorious climate of sunshine for your health or the health of some member of your family, and have come with sufficient income, never think that money-making is the only proper method of occupying your time here. There are hundreds and thousands of other and far better ways of filling your moments. So for all Americans. Let it be emphasized that when one does not need the money, the constant amassing of it only hurts one's family by tempting them to extravagance, and injures one's country by increasing envy and class-distinctions, and—still more to the point—makes of the man who is guilty of it, a miser pure and simple!

Then there is the class of misers who gather together not money but belongings. Can one who spends be a miser? Why yes indeed, if he spends

for what ministers in no degree to life. Furniture, extra houses, jewels, trips to Europe, these may and even usually do aid better and more gracious living and if they are thus useful, nobody has any right to condemn them. But when they are acquired, not for life, but for pride of ownership and a desire to swagger, then these and all other such unassimilated possessions are so many various outcroppings of the hoarding spirit. Ostentation is clearly at bottom miserliness, for it prizes costliness above life. It is said that there are ten women in New York who own, each of them, diamonds to the value of a half million dollars or over. One of them, not long since, wore $450,000 in jewelry to a party. Was that really useful to her life or happiness? Not in the least! She was a miser, that was all: and socially speaking the more dangerous for being a miser not in private, but in full public view!

It sometimes occurs to me, lingering still upon miserliness in material things, that we all of us in these days play the miser far too much in our gloatings over our modern conveniences. We are able to do many things quickly and easily which our fathers did much more cumbersomely. That is all very well and very pleasant for us. But the object of it is or should be better living.

Conveniences ought never to be mere ends in themselves. A Pullman train is not superior to the older stage-coach if the time and effort saved conduces in no way to greater human value and usefulness. A wireless message, in itself considered, is no better than the note delivered by hand after long weary miles of sailing, if men's living is not in some degree deepened by the greater rapidity of communication. The remark is sometimes heard that the old-style long letters had a quiet vitality and helpfulness which the curt telephone-talk lacks. Whether this is so or not is not perhaps definitely certain, but in so far as it is an accurate statement, it goes to show that we are not using the telephone's opportunity as we ought. Our modern conveniences are aids in general to living more inclusively and effectively. I feel sure that in a large, broad way they do help that better life and that wiser, more earnest spirit which is undoubtedly in the world of today. What I insist upon is that they *must* do this. If we who have so much more than our fathers had are not, every one of us, beyond our fathers in most important respects, that fact would indicate at once that we are a decidedly inferior brood as compared with them. In so far as we have more, in just so far is more and better life to be expected of us.

The question for our generation in this regard is this: Are our modern appliances and advantages mere enjoyments and luxuries, or do they release us as they can do and ought to do, to more blessed, more vital, more helpful living? We call them "improvements": what do they improve? Our comfort or our life? Do we revel in them like misers, or do we sincerely and earnestly make good use of them? To take them as a matter of course, and be not the better but the more at ease, the more selfishly luxurious because of them, this is to hoard comfort upon comfort, ignoring the warning that the life is more than the means of life.

But miserliness is to be discovered not in material ways alone. There are intellectual misers. There are, for example, the specialists in the scientific and educational world. Surely specialists ought not to be condemned wholesale. It is they, in cases without number, who have made our modern existence wiser, safer, happier, and saner. They are usually ministers to life. But there is now and then a danger that some of them may become misers—misers of knowledge. The modern splitting up of a subject into infinitesimal regions in each of which some man imprisons himself ministers not always to living, but sometimes to mere

acquisitiveness. You will remember perhaps the young man, son of a specialist on ailments of the nose and throat, who informed his father one day, late in his medical course, that he intended to devote his attention in his profession to the nostril exclusively. The father made no objection but queried casually, "which nostril?" Such a point of view is of course simply ludicrous and the story can scarcely be intended to be taken seriously, I know. Yet for all that, some present-day specialization comes perilously near being of this type. Detailed accurate information is valuable and vital to the living of us all, but if it is too near-sighted or too much cut off from the larger universe of facts, it very speedily becomes distorted and in so far profoundly inaccurate. Still more, the man who specializes in this inhuman fashion is in danger of making of himself very soon a mere automaton, gathering facts indefatigably but neither living upon them himself nor making them really available for others. Such specialists have forgotten that a fact is not in itself valuable. They fail to realize that life is more than any fact as such can ever be.

But the putting of knowledge above life is not confined to a few scientific specialists. Look at our latter-day universal respect for education. This respect is justified by the larger, deeper life

education ordinarily brings, but it must not be overlooked that it is the life which knowledge of this sort serves that is the important matter. Young people have been known cruelly to evade home duties and responsibilities because they were determined to graduate from college, even though mother had to take in washing and the younger children of the family grow up stunted by extreme poverty. An education of such a type, founded upon selfishness and the ignoring of duty is a sin and a shame: it is not the life but the death of the spirit. Education ministers usually to life, but when education and life conflict, then life, true, loving, dutiful life must be emphasized rather than this means of life!

The average man, also, who never went to college nor ever expects to, is often tempted to this same idolatrous miserliness as to knowledge. There is a widespread thirst for knowledge which is fine and wholesome in so far as knowledge ordinarily broadens and develops and glorifies living. But now and again there is need of insisting upon the supreme importance of life over knowledge. There is a consuming passion for knowing more which is in the air nowadays and affects everybody more or less. People will flock to any and every opportunity for learning something, but they will be

strangely oblivious when it is not knowledge but life which is offered them. For example there is a tendency, of which every church can furnish illustrations, for the men to be present at a discussion of social problems in one of our Sunday-school "business man's" classes and then to omit to stay to the regular worship of the church which immediately follows. The former is knowledge, the latter is life, and they show in this way how decidedly they rate knowledge above life! Similarly women will crowd a university lecture-room at a club meeting to hear the details of a Peruvian epic or an Icelandic saga, but they have no time for a prayer-meeting which can feed their souls. They rate knowledge above life! Yes, and some church-members will listen to sermons which contain, it is to be supposed, some degree of information, but their minds will be far away during the preliminary service which so powerfully aids spiritual living, if it is carefully followed. Then there is the matter of attendance at the bi-monthly observance of the Lord's Supper. This is peculiarly, as all are aware, an offer of life, yet this service is always, in every church, more poorly attended than the regular preaching. The trouble with church-members in such cases is that they, too, rate knowledge above life.

We put knowledge above life in more individual ways as well. Father will read the newspaper for an hour for the facts contained therein, when he ought to be living fifty minutes of that hour with his boys, influencing them and vitalizing their ideals. Mother will read her *Ladies Home Journal* or talk over the telephone about a novelty in fancy-work, though she has, as she thinks, no time for living close to the daily thoughts and awakening needs of her daughter.

Oh, again and again we, all of us, allow the pursuit of knowledge to stifle life! We are, it often seems, simply infatuated with knowledge for knowledge's sake. It is reaching the point where men will do well-nigh anything for the merest scrap or morsel of reliable information. We are, many of us, so devoted to knowledge that we have little time or energy left for life. Surely, surely this is miserliness, the rating of the means of living above life itself. Ask yourself how much of your time, outside your daily occupation, is given to your better living and that of your family, and how much to the gathering of information of one sort or another: and you will be startled, I venture to predict, to discover how largely the quest of knowledge has usurped almost all of your leisure. Now knowledge as a means to life has a value, but

knowledge is not and must not be allowed to become an end in itself. The heaping up of information and facts is as such no more elevating than the heaping up miser-fashion of anything else. This sounds like heresy, but it is true. The supreme value is not any means to life, but life, *life!*

One might go on to refer to other forms of miserliness which are nowadays appearing. One might advert to the rivalry in heaping up warships and armies which is the miserliness on a large scale of nearly every civilized nation of the world at this moment. One might pause on that passion for mere size and numbers which infects cities and states and schools—and even churches sometimes. Illustrations will recur to you of themselves, once the principle of miserliness is discerned. Almost any good thing can be "misered." The duty of us all as men and citizens is to live truly, making every means to life serve its purpose, not allowing any to stiffen into dead material for piling up a hoard. God created things for life, never life for things!

OUR MODERN BABEL

"BE still and know that I am God!" says the Psalmist. That is, however, a hard requirement in this present day to fulfil! For we live, and to a large extent we must live, in a world which is a Babel of busy, bustling noise and confusion.

The cultivated man becomes most conscious of this Babel perhaps when he remarks the many and varying cries which call to him from all directions. Look at the news-sheets both daily and weekly, which gather on our reading-tables so rapidly that we cannot burn them fast enough to keep the pile within reasonable proportions. Think of the monthlies and quarterlies that litter our houses and weigh down our mails, every one of them a chorus of voices shouting information and new ideas from all the world and from all times into our poor ears. Read merely the titles of the hundreds and thousands of books every week being published and advertised and commented upon. Consider the time and labor spent in our universities to excogitate some novel theory so that still another book or article may come into being. There can be little doubt that the reading public is in these days living in Babel.

But not that alone: all of us, whether we are

in touch with the world of the mind or not, know what the word Babel means in our enjoyments and activities. Is it not true that the average person everywhere is able to be everything but still? We are forever in motion in body if not in mind. We are either calling or receiving calls, attending a concert or a club-meeting or an entertainment or lodge or gatherings or receptions or institutes or what not. Continually we are going out or coming in, getting ready for or getting over something or other, ever anticipating or filled with memories of some exciting strenuous activity. Even worse are the thronging worries and anxieties which buzz unceasingly about the heads of most of us, keeping us awake nights and graving wrinkles in our faces: fear of losing our positions or our savings, worry about next week's or next year's prosperity, or, it may be, black care for tomorrow's daily bread which dogs the steps of many in these times. Then finally see the reign nowadays of committees and conferences and "movements" of all kinds in charities and in churches, in political parties and in missionary boards, wherever one looks. Circular letters, personal appeals, unionizing efforts of every sort, these, from yet another angle, swell the loud crescendo which rends the air today. We live, each of us, in a world slightly differing

from that of every other human being, but the world of us all is, in one way or another, a perfect Babel of information and discussion, of activity and perpetual motion, of machinery and multiplied methods of organization, of cares and anxieties. We move in a chaos of conflicting cries and calls which are numerous and various and, in particular, taken all together, deafening. It is little wonder that amid this uproar we cannot think or worship. Men and women will smile with weary sarcasm at the admonition to "be still and know that I am God!"

Yet those words must be heeded. This unmitigated confusion of modern life cannot be allowed to continue. Already indeed there are many evil results of it beginning to show themselves. There is that unrest and tenseness, especially to be observed in this country and therefore often called in grim jest "Americanitis"! Men and women become so accustomed to the turmoil and incessant bustle about them and within them that they cannot or at least will not do without it. They must be ever "on the go"; they are bored inexpressibly if they chance to be where all is quiet or even if they are obliged to stay at home for an evening: and if they are so unfortunate as to be for a moment by themselves with nobody to speak to

and nothing to read, they find the situation simply intolerable. How many there are in these days who are chronically, morbidly restless and fidgety we all know very well. It is a baneful condition which is the direct result of our modern Babel!

Still another and more sinister effect is to be remarked in the exhaustion which is caused by this unquiet over-stimulated manner of life. Collapses and break-downs are occurring every day. None seem exempt. We are constantly hearing with surprise that so-and-so, the very one often of whom we should have least expected it, has stopped work and is taking a journey or a course of sanatorium treatment for his health. All about us men and women are wearing out before their time. They are showing the strain, the over-strain of all this noisy, never-ceasing tumult, until it almost seems sometimes that men cannot do full work at present and live to a good, healthy old age as formerly.

The worst result of our modern Babel, however, is the spiritual one. Even where people escape the unnatural unrest of the day, even though they are sufficiently robust to risk nervous prostration with impunity, yet our modern life with its noise and its incessant claims upon us makes leisure and stillness and therefore religion almost if not quite

impossible and that is a tremendous, crucial indictment of this generation. It is undoubtedly true that our times are effective, immensely effective. We are doing all sorts of things of which our fathers never dreamed. Our successes and conveniences are startling as compared with those of even twenty-five years ago. We are solving many scientific and historical problems which were earlier thought to be insurmountable. We are gaining comfort and knowledge and power by leaps and bounds. But if we have lost the ability to be still, we are worse and not better off despite it all. This modern world is a good world; the things it accomplishes are not in any sense to be condemned: but if it cannot perform its tasks without overtightening the strings and sapping men's vigor; above all if people cannot live in this modern world and on occasion be still within, still to a sufficient degree to know and hear God: then our modern existence stands convicted, for what shall it profit a man, or a generation, to gain the whole world and lose its own soul! If we must choose between modern efficiency and human life well-rounded and true, there is no question which we ought to choose.

But are we shut up to a dilemma of this kind? Must we choose between modern results and

human values? Is this never-pausing confusion and noisy hubbub necessary to our present-day effectiveness? Much must go on and many things we do must be done, but need the modern world be a Babel, crushing, deafening, destroying? Why no! we realize it the moment we really turn our thoughts to the matter. We should keep our modern wonderful results, but we must and we can, if we try, abate the turmoil of it all. Already there are many attempts in this direction manifesting themselves. There is the anti-noise crusade at the very bottom, which stands as a physical analogue of all the rest. There are the extensions of park-systems and breathing-spots in our cities. There is the vacation idea spreading more widely every year—a practical and useful method of soothing the ever-present over-stimulation. The move toward suburban dwellings is operating toward the same valuable end. And then the reign of machinery in social helpfulness is mercifully lightening in certain directions. We begin to comprehend that, while organizations and committees are often indispensable, things can be carried on more simply and with less creaking of mechanism. Reformers and lovers of mankind are coming to recognize that over-organization is a graver danger to a good cause than used to be

realized. We are depending more largely of late upon men's good sense. We are accomplishing things more through common feelings and ideals than we used to. Even our political machines are feeling the new emphasis and losing consequently their earlier prestige to some extent. We are realizing that our form of government itself may be, and, indeed, to a larger extent than we know, already is what President Hadley in one of his treatises calls "government by public opinion," not by clangorous wheels within wheels, but by an intangible unhurrying spirit. So within the church, we are recovering, or soon will recover, from our former fever for organizations of any and every sort. That forming a committee or society for every conceivable object has worn out, all unnecessarily in the past, far too many of the saints. In general men within as without the church are considering in their estimate of a man, not the organization, ecclesiastical or otherwise, to which he belongs, but the quality and character of the man himself. Fair dealing, sympathy, brotherliness, these are being seen to be the really important data. The things of chief value are not the varying denominations of churches, not the richness or barrenness of their liturgy, not the details of their descriptions of God—all tending

to wrangling and Babel. It is not these or anything like them which count most: it is the right spirit, silent but effective, which thinking men respect and believe should be cultivated. In school and college too, views are changing. There is a turning away from multitudinous studies and the ideal of encyclopedic information which only tends to confuse and stifle the mind—even the mature mind. In place of that, educators are seeking to establish symmetrical cultural courses whose prime effect will be to evoke and mold mental poise and vigor. Not knowledge, which is Babel, but wisdom and quiet power are increasingly the aim of the best education today. In all these ways—some obvious, some not so apparent—the trend is observable away from noisy and confused voices of whatever type, and toward a deeper silence and a more fundamental dependence upon life and spirit. Those men and women who are wisest are becoming aware that the Babel quality of modern life is not only dangerous but unnecessary, and they are consequently moving in a campaign against it, hushing little by little, as they can, the blare of it.

Yet with all that has been done in these ways, the modern world in which we must live remains still, as yet, all too noisy, tense, suffocating,

ruinous a fact. Babel is not overcome, far from it! It is all about us and we must do what we can, each for ourselves, that we may be, in the very heart of it, at times still. How shall we, how can we achieve this which seems to many of us utterly impossible? First of all let us ease the strain as we can whenever it is possible. Nature does it for us sometimes by a rainy downpour or a blizzard which keeps us indoors, but we should not wait for such compulsion which does not come always at just the needed moment, and especially in this climate of ours where nature almost never shuts us in. Let us hold ourselves at home for our own good now and then, taking one evening in each week, taking it by main force if it is necessary—and it often will be—and spending it quietly, leisurely by our own fireside with our family. Again we can keep ourselves from having engagements, from holding offices, from attempting plans of reading, up to the full capacity of our time. This does not mean that we should do nothing: it does mean that we should not allow ourselves to be swamped, as many are nowadays, by what we seek in vain to do. We can, further, utilize the pauses which sometimes come, when we have missed a train, or lie awake at night, or are laid aside by illness. Let us spend these times of

waiting, not with that impatience and watching the clock or the calendar which is the common practice with most of us: let us rather welcome these pauses as so many God-given opportunities for stillness of soul. Ease the strain! That is the first self-defense of each of us against our modern Babel.

There is also another way of self-protection. It is the doing of certain deeds for spiritual ends—deeds which are not practical and promise to bring us no return in either money or information or pleasure, but are yet worth while because they will strengthen and nourish the inner life. We might each day, every one of us, read and brood upon a page, or a single sentence even, of some book which is "still," giving upon the deeper realities. Such books are, above all, the Bible, but also Emerson, or Thoreau, or many another, or perhaps one of those little collections of helpful, vital quotations which ought to have a place on the table of every one of us. Or a similar result might be aided by the observation of surrounding outdoor nature, in beautiful and threatening moods alike, in light and in shadow, in clear or snowy weather. It takes no appreciable amount of time to notice these wonders of God day by day as we go about our tasks, but persisted in, this observing with the

seeing eye deepens the soul and helps us to that quietness we now and then must have. So with prayer, for every Christian who has learned what it is and how it is offered. Indeed much that has been described above *is* prayer.

Here then is the sum of the whole matter. Our modern world, if we are not on our guard, will be to us wearing, disintegrating, soul-destroying, and our refuge from it all is to be at times still. The warning of the Psalmist with which we began is not an unmeaning command put upon us by an official authority: it is a highly valuable piece of advice to our day and to ourselves as individuals. In just so far as we take it to heart, shall we save our life, physical, social, spiritual! May we not hope that God may teach us and our times the meaning of quietness and slow time, moderating for us the allegro of modern life, bestowing upon us more and more His peace, the peace which passeth all understanding!

THE VICTORY OF HOPE

THERE is a celebrated painting, by George Frederick Watts, of a woman crouching on a great rock, blindfolded, and clutching tight a lyre every string of which, save one, is broken. On that one string she plays and listens, eagerly bending over and putting her ear close, to hear that slight music which is still possible to her. The painting is called "Hope." Probably most of us are at first surprised by that title. Can this be hope? Hope is not for us something tense and desolated in this fashion. We think of it as a final joy of the gladsome; as that which gilds the gold and refines the rose of happiness; as lending an additional flavor of anticipation to the feast of life; not as clinging to one last string or listening to one last possibility, but as exuberant, overflowing. If we were to paint "Hope," we should paint it almost certainly as a bright stalwart youth, standing upright and joyous, gazing ahead with shining eyes, striking with force and glee a full-stringed lyre. It would never occur to us to picture it as a blinded and forlorn maiden, brooding over an all but demolished music. And yet, the more one thinks of it, the more must one realize the truth of Watts's painting. There is a passage in the Psalms which

says the same thing in words. "Why art thou cast down O my soul, and why art thou disquieted within me? Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God."* The real meaning of it all, according to Watts and the Psalmist, is something like this: Hope is not having everything and looking for still more. That could hardly be called a virtue, and hope is decidedly a virtue. No, hope is the forcible upholding and supporting of the soul when all else gives way. It is not a fair-weather matter: it is a storm-and-stress virtue. It is not a fragrant bouquet of flowers, adorning a banquet of good things: it is an anchor, rusty, uncouth, but strong—an anchor that holds firm when tempestuous waves almost overwhelm the ship of life.

See how the Psalmist exemplifies in detail this virtue of hope. For the man who uttered the words just quoted, God was a hidden quantity. All was "black as the pit from pole to pole" so far as he was concerned. He could not praise God. He could not feel sure that there was a God in his present mood. Nor was there any prospect of aid or better times to be discerned. He was distressed and perplexed. His soul was

*Ps. 42:11.

cast down and disquieted within him. In all these difficulties the only support he had was his resolute determination. It was not God but hope that for the moment sustained him. Not that God was really absent. He was, of course, near by as, however distant he may seem, he is ever near to every son of man. But so far as the Psalmist could know or even believe, in the mood he was in, God was not with him. Yet he held on; he bore up despite his loneliness and depression and danger. Oh, there is courage, there is virtue in that hoarse shout of the Psalmist to his soul, "Hope thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God!"

We all need to consider and realize the value and place of this virtue of hope. For there is no life but has its times when everything seems to give way, when the only support which can keep us from shipwreck is the valiant assertion of hope, even when we feel least like hoping. God deals with men, we must remember, in two typical ways: by his presence, clear and winning—there is no problem in that—but also by his apparent absence, chilling and hard; by lifting up all our difficulty for us—that is what we like and seek from him—but also by letting us bear it alone; by keeping temptation far from us—it is for that we pray in

the Lord's Prayer—but also by allowing us to be tested to the uttermost; by giving us joys and prosperities, but also by taking these from us one by one. There are pleasant, and there are unpleasant ways of God with the souls of men. There are comprehensible, and there are incomprehensible dealings of the Almighty. They are all divine and righteous. There is no chance or whim about their coming to us. God uses both methods, the kindly and the harsh alike, carefully, wisely, the one as much so as the other. He does not love us less—perhaps, as the author of the Epistle to the Hebrews suggests,* he really loves us more—when he sends what we dislike. There is a divine purpose behind the darkest night that may enshroud us. God uses hard chastenings for the same reason that he uses what happiness he gives to us: in order that we may be developed, spiritualized, led to do in the best way his work in the world—his service which is perfect freedom. However cruel his dealings sometimes seem, they are chosen and sent upon us with infinite care and are every one signs of his love and his pity. Difficulty and danger, loss and bereavement—these are not indications then that God has forgotten or is neglecting us, still less that he wantonly enjoys our bewilderment

* Chap. 12.

and perplexity, as we are sometimes in our despair tempted to think. Earthly parents do, it is true, now and then tease and even frighten a child for their own amusement—and a most unkind and selfish recreation it is. But God does nothing in that spirit. All that he sends, all that he allows to come upon us is an instrument in his hand to assist us to self-reliance and character and courage, to living mature manhood or womanhood and usefulness. Like the mother-bird with her fledglings, God frequently, for the same wise reason, pushes us forth from the easy, comfortable nest in which we are, and bids us use our wings for ourselves. How should we ever be masters of our own powers, if God were forever carrying us on "flowery beds of ease"? There is a meaning then in every chastening or withdrawing of the Father. Even in the bitterest stress of life, hope is never foolish and futile.

But oh it is hard! We have all known how hard! What a desolation comes over us when we grasp the fact of God's absence! How terrible it is when he leaves us, heartlessly it seems, solitary and deserted in the midst of peril. There is no doubt that it is painful. Such times are for every man or woman stormy weather beyond a peradventure. Our souls will of necessity be cast

down. We shall feel sore and grieved. Like Job, in his first writhings of anguish, we shall perhaps find no words or thoughts too bitter. Like Elijah under the juniper tree, we shall find it easy to say, "It is enough, now O Lord, take away my life!" Like Jesus, even Jesus, on the cross we too may groan, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" We shall be profoundly disquieted and cast down. It is natural that at the first moment it should be thus with us. One would scarcely be human, if it were not so. But after those first moments of stunned amazement, then is the time, the very time for the victory of hope.

Consider a few applications of the victory of hope to hard places in our lives. The first and most obvious of these will naturally be misfortune or bereavement. There come to us, or there will come before we are done with life, times when much is taken from us and more and more, as the weeks go by, seems ruthlessly torn from our grasp. We cannot understand it. We are dazed. We could say with the writer of the psalm: "All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me." We incline to say that all is wrong. Nothing seems any longer worth while to us. The world is out of joint! Even God tarries. He is for the time neither a help nor an encouragement. We cry

aloud for that which we have lost, for the dear relative whom we cannot do without, or at least for a mighty support from the divine compassion. But nothing comes. God is silent. "Oh," we groan within ourselves, "where is he, that I might find him!" But alas! we cannot find him. Ah! there we must say—what else is there possible for us to say—"*Hope* thou in God, for I shall yet praise him who is the health of my countenance and my God." Hope, nothing but hope, can carry one through the desolation and the apparent God-forsakenness of some forms of affliction.

Another place for hope is our later Christian lives and beliefs, especially as we compare these with our earlier certainties. At the beginning of our Christian living, above all if we were converted in the old-fashioned way, everything was easy. God was certainly present for us every moment. We could do any task—we were sure of it—if only we knew it to be our duty. We shouted, within our souls, as sober fact those words of the inspired enthusiast, "I can do all things in him that strengtheneth me." "How obvious, how simple, how glorious to be a Christian!" so we cried to ourselves and to others, in the glad newness of the eternal life. We were God-intoxicated. All life was to be, henceforward, walking in a plain path,

hand in hand with the infinite Father of our souls. Yet those wonderful sunrise moments of the new life and the new determination faded away. It became harder to do what we knew we ought to do. Practicing the presence of God was not so easy. During days and even weeks at a time since then, we have not felt that earlier certainty of God.

Often this falling away comes, in a different form, to college students. Away from home and the home religion, amid new ideas of life and duty, overborne sometimes by mistaken or misunderstood implications of the modern scientific view of the world—thus surrounded and beset, many a youth and maiden has fallen into a slough of despond as regards his or her Christian faith. What is prayer and why should one pray? What is God and where is he? What is the real basis and what, after all is said and done, is the use of religion and the accepting of anything on faith? Is not the Christian life perhaps, that life which meant so much formerly, only an illusion? So the mind of many a student in the growing years of his intellect, is beaten and almost driven as it seems, into a retreat. It is a hard time when one stands between two worlds of faith, "the one dead, the other" as yet "powerless to be born." But oh! that is the time for hope, in the very midst of

spiritual dejection. That is the time for reaching back to what has been, assuring oneself that in all essentials it shall be again. That is the time for facing the odds and the doubts valiantly and unflinchingly. Only hope is left but hope is possible. Bear, O honest doubter, the weight—the dead weight it may be—of life's truths and ideals, when such bearing is called for. "Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling," but with courage and persistence too! This is the valley of shadow for many a Christian faith, but "hope thou in God" and he shall yet bring you through to new but no less Christian views, to assured and sincere walks and communings with him again. In all religious questionings strive to be like him of whom Tennyson sings,

> He fought his doubts and gathered strength
> . . . . . .
> He faced the spectres of the mind
> And laid them: thus he came at length
>
> To find a stronger faith his own;
> And Power was with him in the night,
> Which makes the darkness and the light,
> And dwells not in the light alone,
>
> But in the darkness and the cloud.

Again there is great need of hope in temptation as it comes upon us in the allurements of some evil course of action. This situation appears some-

times to be harder than we can withstand. It breaks upon us so mightily and often so unexpectedly. We look for aid from above, but the skies are brass over our heads. All the world about us bids us yield. Our own hearts shrink from the struggle. The very absence of God appeals to us as an argument for yielding. "If God comes not and as it seems cares not, why should I care either?" we question within ourselves. "Why not curse God and die of this pleasant sin?" We go even further in our desperation. "Is there indeed a God if he can fail me here, in my hour of sorest need?" Why not say with Nietzsche, "God is dead!" "Why not begin from now to live as pleases myself!" Here again the remedy is hope, hope in what is not now but shall yet be.

Ah these moments of terrible loneliness, of bearing life, all of it, with our own muscle if life is to be upborne at all, they are crucial moments! They seem to be too much for flesh and blood, but they are not. God allows strain but never overstrain of the spirit. He never tests us above that we "are able; but will with the temptation make also the way of escape that" we "may be able to endure it." Though the burden is hard, it is never crushing unless we permit ourselves to be crushed. In every exigency which God sends, we

can hope even though we can do nothing else. Without hope we must fail in dark hours, but with hope we can overcome, we can push through the difficulty. It is for us to say—how many brave souls have said it—"I cannot see, but I shall see! I cannot know or even feel sure of God now, but I shall know! I could yield so easily, but I will not! I could doubt, I could cry aloud to heaven, Joblike, my fears and despairings, but I will hold fast, through all! Everything is against me, I am filled with perplexity and distress; all seems to be lost, my eyes are blinded, my heart is empty; I am 'in the fell clutch of circumstance,' but yet I will hope, and I will not yield!" Ah, is not hope a virtue and a victory precisely at the most painful extremities?

The continuity of our life, of our true selves, depends, in fact at the last upon this. In a deep sense we are ourselves responsible for our moral success or failure in living, for it all rests back upon that hope which proceeds from our innermost souls and which must—for it alone can—hold us on our course: in darkness as in light, in storm as under sunny skies, in solitude as in the full consciousness of the presence and favor of God. In every trial, in every difficulty, in every forsakenness, "hope thou in God," for thou shalt yet see him, yes and thank him for every one of his leadings!

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